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VOLUME LXIII, NUMBER 19328 WEDNESDAY, JULY 11, 1996

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Jordanian PM makes surprise visit to Israel

Jordanian Prime Minister Abdul-Karim Kabariti made an unexpected visit to Israel last night in an apparent prelude to Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's trip to Egypt tomorrow.

Officials in the Prime Minister's Office said the meeting was initiated by Kabariti, who earlier in the day visited Egypt. After the meeting, Kabariti told reporters that he briefed Netanyahu on his earlier meeting with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Sham. (Story, Page 2)

The meeting, which included top aides from both sides, was held at the Prime Minister's Office in Tel Aviv.

Arab officials and European governments have looked to Jordan, due to Anoman's close relationship to the Netanyahu government, to convey its

concern about Israel's peace policies.

Therefore, there is speculation that after prior consultation in Cairo yesterday, the Arabs urged Kabariti to visit Israel in a bid to help prepare for the visit and ensure a successful outcome to Netanyahu's trip to Egypt.

Netanyahu, announced yesterday that steps would be taken imminently to ease the closure on the territories.

Other moderate Arab countries have reacted warily to Netanyahu. Earlier this week, Gulf states joined Egypt and Syria in issuing a statement voicing deep concern about Netanyahu's peace policies. Moreover, the Moroccan government refused to let Netanyahu's plane stopover in Rabat on the way back from the US.

The meeting between Netanyahu and Mubarak will be the prime minister's first

meeting with an Arab head of state since his election on May 29.

However, before the Netanyahu-Mubarak meeting, Western diplomats conveyed greater skepticism about whether the Netanyahu government is serious about engaging substantively with the Palestinians or rather wants to merely reap public relations gains.

They say there is a pattern of the premier dispatching his foreign policy adviser, Dore Gold, to meet with top Palestinians only on the eve of a major event such as the Arab summit and the Netanyahu visit to Washington. Yesterday a meeting took place between Gold and top Palestinian negotiator Mahmoud Abbas.

Sources say that in the meeting yesterday Gold did not convey any information about easing the closure. An official in the Prime Minister's Office said last night that he did not think that specifics had been decided upon yet, and that this would be left to Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai.

It is known that Civil Administration officials have favored sharply increasing the number of Palestinian workers allowed to work inside Israel and have favored the use of IDF escort convoys to enable the safe passage of Palestinians between the West Bank and Gaza.

"It will be gradual and subordinate to security considerations," an official from Netanyahu's office said.

Sources said the IDF had presented a list of suggested steps to take to ease the

closure. These include issuing more work permits to the tens of thousands of Palestinians seeking employment in Israel and increasing the amount of produce and goods allowed to pass in and out of the territories.

The current closure has been in effect since the wave of suicide attacks began in February. Since the elections it has been eased gradually. Today some 25,000 Palestinian laborers are permitted to pass daily to their jobs in Israel, but these have been restricted to include only middle-aged, married workers.

In Washington, State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns welcomed the announcement. He said President Clinton and Secretary of State Warren Christopher had urged an easing during

(Continued on Page 2)



Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu meets his Jordanian counterpart, Abdul-Karim Kabariti (left) in Tel Aviv last night. (Israel Sun)

400,000 workers strike today

THE economy will grind to a halt today as some 400,000 workers strike from 6 a.m. to 4 p.m., as part of the Histadrut and labor unions' protest against the government's economic program.

The strike in the public sector is to encompass all government ministries, local authorities, public hospitals, banks and the stock market. For Bank Hapoalim, it will be the first strike in 75 years. Disruptions are expected in train and bus schedules.

Histadrut Chairman MK Amir Peretz convened the leaders of the

MICHAL YUDELMAN

large unions and labor council secretaries for an emergency meeting last night for last-minute instructions on the strike and the mass demonstration the Histadrut is to hold today at 11 a.m. outside the Knesset.

Last night, the Tel Aviv Regional Labor Court issued an injunction forbidding the Ports and Railway Authority, the Airports Authority, and El Al from striking. The Histadrut said it would appeal the decision. The

judge said, however, that authority workers would be able to leave work to attend the Histadrut rally today.

The Jerusalem Regional Labor Court was to rule last night on a petition by the Banking Association against the strike. The court yesterday refused the Manufacturers Association's petition for an injunction against the strike, but limited the strike in the industrial sector to two hours.

Histadrut leaders expressed satisfaction with the ruling, noting

(Continued on Page 2)

Hizbullah reportedly releasing bodies of two MIAs today

HIZBULLAH will today hand over the bodies of two Israeli MIAs, presumably those of Yosef Fink and Rabamin Alshelkh, to a representative of the German government, Israel Radio reported, quoting a source in the Lebanese government.

The bodies will be exchanged for Shi'ite Muslim

prisoners held by Israel, Hizbullah said yesterday.

French news agencies said last night that Bernd Schmidbauer, the top intelligence aide to Chancellor Helmut Kohl, would be arriving in Beirut today to handle the exchange.

Earlier report, Page 12

Who is striking?

- MICHAL YUDELMAN
- STATE hospitals and Magen David Adom will operate with only an emergency staff. Kupat Holim Clalit, including all its clinics and offices, will be on strike all day.
- All government ministries, including income tax, customs and VAT offices, will be closed for the day, as will municipal and local authority offices, National Insurance Institute offices and employment bureaus.
 - All the banks, the Bank of Israel, postal agencies and the stock market will be on strike.
 - Israel Radio and Channel 1 may strike for part of the time.
- No university exams will be held; Na'amat and WIZO centers and offices will be closed; municipal summer schools will be closed, though private ones will operate as usual.
 - The Israel Museum will be closed.
 - Egged and Dan will operate their lines with cooperative members only; hired drivers and workers will be on strike.
 - The Tnuva, Strauss and Tara dairies will not supply shops with merchandise. The Histadrut is trying to get chain stores to strike. Private shops will be open as usual.
 - Hotels will operate on a Shabbat schedule, without serving lunch or providing room service.
 - Tel Aviv lifeguards will be on strike.
- Bezeg, the Fire Service, the Israel Electric Corporation and Mekorot will operate on an emergency basis. Pending a court ruling, it was unclear last night whether Ben-Gurion Airport, El Al, Arkia, Eilat Airport, and the ports would be on strike. El Al has rescheduled its flights around the strike.
 - Although the strike is to last only 10 hours, disruptions are expected to continue at least until midnight. Traffic jams are expected on the road to Jerusalem between 9:30 and 10:30 this morning, as 300 buses hired by the Histadrut will head for Jerusalem, carrying some 10,000 workers to demonstrate outside the Knesset.

Treasury announces bond-buying plan

DAVID HARRIS and news agencies

SHARES on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange plummeted yesterday, with the Two-Sided Index falling 4.5%, and the Maof Index losing 5.25%. It was the 10th consecutive day that the market dropped.

The Treasury and the Bank of Israel yesterday agreed on measures they hope will help stabilize the capital market. This stability is crucial for the business sector to continue raising capital.

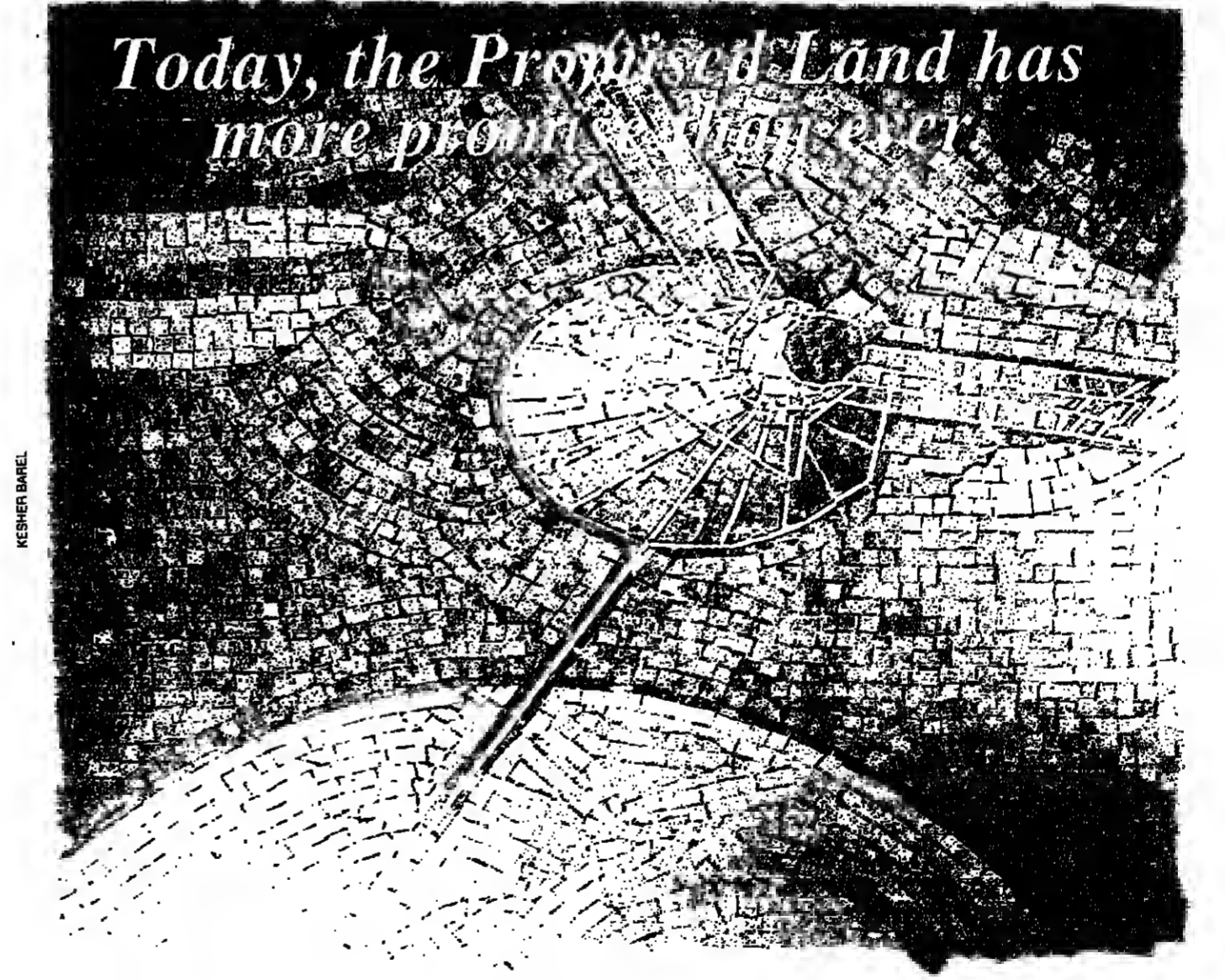
For the strong-stomached, stock bargains abound

COMMENT
NEIL COHEN

THE market is collapsing for three reasons:

- 1) Panicked investors have been dumping stocks indiscriminately. In particular, provident and mutual funds have been hit by heavy redemptions - savers asking for their money back, forcing the funds to liquidate positions to raise cash. When there are more sellers
- 2) High interest rates hit the market with a double whammy. By making capital more expensive, they hurt corporate profits. And by offering savers high returns on risk-free bank deposits

(Continued on Page 8)



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The central bank says it plans to institute a guaranteed minimum return for provident funds. This is aimed at preventing fund members from redeeming shares and forcing the funds to sell stocks to meet the redemptions.

In a joint statement, the two bodies announced that the Bank of Israel will buy inflation-linked

(Continued on Page 2)

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Syrian FM warns Israel: Don't change direction of peace process

SYRIA said yesterday that the Arab world would reject any Israeli attempt to change the ground rules in Middle East peace negotiations.

"Any attempt to violate or change the basis of the peace process will not succeed," Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Shara told reporters in Cairo after a meeting with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

Shara also met with Jordanian Prime Minister Abdullah Karim Kabariti yesterday.

Shara said the leaders of Egypt and Jordan would remind Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of the already agreed upon principles of peace in his upcoming meetings with them. Netanyahu is expected in Egypt tomorrow and is due to visit Jordan a week later.

"Land for peace is something we agreed upon and there will be no change in it. President Mubarak will repeat that and I am sure that [Jordan's] King Hussein also will repeat that. We will continue to insist on a just and comprehensive peace based on the land for peace formula," Shara said.

Kabariti, whose country has had to fend off Arab criticism that it has been too quick to make up with Israel, said Netanyahu's tough policies have alarmed his country.

"Netanyahu's statements worry us a lot especially when it

HILLEL KUTTLER
and news agencies

comes to issues related to Jerusalem and to settlements," Kabariti said.

"However, he stated clearly that Israel will be committed to whatever agreement they have signed or arrived at with the Arab parties and we believe that respecting those agreements will be the basis for hope that the peace process will continue."

"We want to listen to Netanyahu and not to judge his policies and direction from his statements and speeches," he said.

"Jordan views the peace process in a comprehensive way and there is no peace process without it being comprehensive... peace must refer to principles of international resolutions and the land for peace principle," Kabariti added.

The US's special Middle East coordinator Dennis Ross will return to the region next week for consultations with the key players in the peace process, a senior US official said yesterday.

Ross will bring a letter from President Bill Clinton to Syrian President Hafez Assad assuring him of the US's

commitment to helping restart Israeli-Syrian talks, he said.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher and the US peace team visited Israel and Egypt three weeks ago, before Netanyahu's inaugural visit to the US. The official said that while Christopher had planned a longer visit to the region this summer, it is not now in the works.

Letters also were delivered in recent days to Mubarak, Morocco's King Hassan II, King Hussein and Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat, the official said. Such letters are often sent to Arab leaders following a visit by an Israeli prime minister when there is uncertainty in the Arab world about an Israeli position, he explained.

The official said the letters reiterated, in part, that "our position on this issue [settlements] has not changed - that we still see it as a problem," he said.

The US sees tomorrow's scheduled Mubarak-Netanyahu meeting as an opportunity for Netanyahu to assure the Arab world that he wants to keep them "on board" in the peace process, and for Mubarak to convey those concerns, the official said.

However, the US played no role prior to the Cairo meeting, he added.

Mubarak is due to meet with Clinton on July 30.

Barak attacks Netanyahu government for economic crisis

MICHAEL YUDELMAN

THE crisis in the capital market is not a reaction to the interest rates or the draining of the provident funds, "but to the confusion, lack of direction and internal contradiction radiated by Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu," Labor MK Ehud Barak said yesterday.

In his first attack on Netanyahu and his government, former foreign minister Barak said that only a determined continuation of the peace process will reinstate domestic and international confidence in Israel's economy. "Not nocturnal meetings but a courageous policy by daylight on economic, security and foreign affairs, that's what the state needs to stabilize the capital market," he said.

Barak called on Netanyahu "to climb down immediately from the lofty election slogans on economic and security matters and return to the firm earth of reality."

He urged Netanyahu to issue a statement right away setting a date for his meeting with Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat and for the redeployment in Hebron, and to hold a down-to-business discussion with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Cairo on the continuation of the peace process.

These moves will contribute to

rebuild the confidence in Israel's government both in Tel Aviv and on Wall Street - no less than reducing the interest rate by .5% to 1%, he said.

Labor MK Haim Ramon blasted the government's economic policy "which in one month deteriorated the stock market by 15%. This is the public's real opinion on its government."

Ramon upheld the Histadrut and workers' right to strike against the government's anticipated economic measures, noting that "the government must negotiate with the body which represents more than 600,000 workers and pensioners, who are the main victims of the economic program."

He dismissed the arguments that the strike is premature, stressing "the cabinet has made decisions which oblige the coalition, that is a very serious thing indeed. The government should have negotiated with the Histadrut before doing so."

"The Histadrut showed understanding for the economic situation and was ready to be a partner to the budget cuts, if the government would negotiate a just and correct economic and social policy. But the government rejected this approach."

Shahak's trip to Russia postponed

ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

RUSSIA'S new government has canceled a visit there later this month by Chief of General Staff Lt-Gen. Amnon Lipkin-Shahak, the army said. Reports from Russia attributed this to the internal upheaval in the Russian military brass resulting from the recent elections there.

A Defense Ministry official confirmed that Shahak was to have visited Russia sometime this month, but that the trip was delayed. The official declined to speculate as to why.

"It was postponed a bit, that is all," the official said.

The IDF spokesman also declined to comment on the reason.

The Foreign Ministry curiously claimed they knew of no planned visit by the chief-of-staff to Russia.

The visit most likely would have dealt with the two-year defense memorandum signed between the two countries last December during a visit here by then-Russian defense minister Pavel Grachev.

The agreement covered an array of issues, including research and development of advanced avionics systems and combat jet upgrading technologies. It was hoped that joint projects would have been advanced by Shahak's visit.

Since the agreement, Russian President Boris Yeltsin has replaced Grachev with Alexander Lebed. This change has left the Russian defense establishment in a state of uncertainty.

It is expected that Shahak's visit will be rescheduled once a new Russian defense minister is named. However, the cancellation may also be a sign of Russian Foreign Minister Yevgey Primakov's position.

Yesterday, following a meeting in Moscow with his Egyptian counterpart Amr Moussa, Primakov said Russia was determined to "keep the peace process alive."

Primakov's deputy Viktor Posvalyuk said that Moscow is eyeing a bigger role in Middle East peacemaking.

Eitan examines security procedures at Gaza crossing

AGRICULTURE Minister Rafael Eitan visited the Border Police base in Kiryat Gat yesterday to examine the security arrangements in place on the Gaza border and in the Mount Hebron area.

He also visited the Kami crossing point in Gaza, where he was briefed on the security arrangements and procedures for transferring goods from the Strip.

"The problem is not just security but the quality of produce and preventing the spread of disease," Eitan said. "I have not yet drawn any conclusions. I will study the matter and then decide about changes."

Eitan met with Hamis Tamous, the Palestinian in charge of the Kami crossing, and they discussed the possibility of easing the closure.

Eitan said he would like to help the Palestinian farmers, and, if invited, would travel to Gaza to meet with Palestinian Authority agriculture officials.

He said the water problems in the PA-controlled territories could be solved by erecting desalination plants in Gaza and in the Beit She'an area. As for the present, he said, "If there's no water, there's no water; we have no other water sources."

He suggested that the Palestinians invite Israeli agricultural experts to check Palestinian produce while it is still in the fields, which he said would go a long way toward preventing produce from being rejected for import at the Kami crossing.

If produce were checked before being packed, it "could be brought in immediately without being checked at Kami," he said.

Tamous welcomed the idea and said he hoped he would be able to implement it.



Tourism Minister Moshe Katsav (right) is briefed on the security situation in Hebron while climbing to an observation point to view the Machpela Cave yesterday. "There needs to be a continual string of settlement between Hebron and Kiryat Arba," he said.

Husseini to lead protest against rezoning of eastern Jerusalem park

BILL HUTMAN

A DEMONSTRATION is slated to occur in an eastern Jerusalem park today to protest plans to rezone the park and turn it over to a Jewish developer.

Palestinians have charged that the park, located on Nablus Road in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood, sits on about five dunams which were expropriated from a Palestinian landowner.

The municipality spokesman said that the

municipality recently discovered that part of the park was built on two dunams of land owned by a Jewish landowner, and that it is being returned to him. The spokesman added that PLO official Faisal Husseini, who organized the protest, is exaggerating the importance of the project. He pointed out that due to zoning regulations only

about 1.1 dunams could be built upon. Several dozen Palestinian children, as well as Husseini, are expected to participate in the demonstration.

The Peace Now-affiliated Ir Shalem group is also supporting the protest. Ir Shalem is filing a petition with the local planning board today against the plan to rezone the park, a spokesman said.

Two killed on Modi'in road

TWO people were killed and five injured in traffic accidents on the Givat Ze'ev-Modi'in highway yesterday. A pregnant woman was killed when two cars collided near Beit Horon. Four people were also injured in the accident, two seriously and two moderately. Shortly afterward, a car and truck collided near Reut. The car's driver was killed.

SOCIAL & PERSONAL

THE WEEKLY MEETING OF THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING JERUSALEM ROTARY CLUB will take place today at 1:00 p.m. at the YMCA, King David Street. H.E. Manuel Emilio Lopez Frogo, the Costa Rican Ambassador, will address the club.

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With deep sorrow, we announce the death of our beloved son, brother, nephew, and grandchild
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The funeral will be held on Thursday, July 18, 1996, at 1:00 p.m., at the Shikun Vatikim Cemetery, Netanya. Mincha following the burial at the shiva house.
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Ruth, Michael, and Aviva Sager, Etery Champion Michael Sput, Murry Sput (Szput), and Anna Sput-Stern (Bondariev)
Shiva at Rehov Hamelachim 40/1 Netanya, until Wednesday, July 24, at 10:00 a.m.

STRIKE

(Continued from Page 1) this is the first time the court recognized the Histadrut's right to hold a protest strike against the government.

Peretz warned yesterday that "the more the government assaults the workers with decrees and Draconian measures, the more the workers will fight back to defend themselves. We are now at a time in which all the norms and balances in the market are being altered, the government is making hasty decisions, and all the decrees are on the workers' backs."

"We are willing to be partners in the economic policy, but they

refused to negotiate with us on a responsible plan. We say to the government, don't make the workers the sole victims of all your cutbacks. Don't run the state on the backs of the workers alone," Peretz said.

Peretz scoffed at the gathering of economic leaders and politicians in luxurious surroundings in Caesarea, saying they are oblivious to the suffering their economic steps are causing.

"They should realize that neither the workers nor the investors - who are running away from the collapsing stock market - are impressed by their posture," Peretz noted.

Peretz dismissed the accusation that the strike is political, saying "people don't understand what a political strike means. They think mistakenly that it's to do with parties. The strike is aimed against the government, no matter what party it belongs to. The previous government did not conduct such an aggressive war against the workers. When MK Yossi Beilin [whose proposals Finance Minister Dan Meridor claims his economic program is based on] suggested similar measures to me before the elections, I rejected them and warned him they would not pass."

Evelyn Gordon adds: MK Avraham Herschson (Likud), chairman of the Likud-affiliated Histadrut Ovdim Leumit, yesterday called on union members not to join the strike, which he said is politically motivated.

He said Leumit also has concerns about the budget cuts, and he will meet with Meridor to discuss them.

"However, we should not participate in political strikes that destroy the economy," he said.

PLAN

(Continued from Page 1) government bonds, to moderate the exceptional fluctuations in the bonds' prices. They said the bond purchases would be financed by selling non-index-linked Treasury bills.

The decision was made following an all-night meeting held by Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, Bank of Israel Governor Jacob Frenkel and Finance Minister Dan Meridor, which finished early yesterday morning.

To implement the plan, the government will initiate an amendment to the Treasury Bill Law, to raise the permitted upper limit for Treasury bill issues as required. This will enable the government to sell more Treasury bills. Treasury bills from this supplement will be sold solely for the purpose of buying the government bonds.

It was not clear yesterday when the government would start buying bonds. In February 1995, the government announced it would throw a similar safety net under the market but only had to intervene once.

(Continued from Page 1) Netanyahu's visit to Washington last week.

"We have long been concerned by the economic suffering of the Palestinian people on the West Bank and Gaza Strip," Burns said. "We hope that easing the closure will allow the Palestinians to get back on their feet."

"The Palestinians feel like they are being manipulated by Netanyahu," a Western diplomat said. "There is a single meeting with the Palestinians before a big event which appears designed to take the heat off Israel. Yet there is no substance, no follow-through on how issues will be addressed."

"To say there will be some unspecified easing of the closure before you meet Mubarak looks like a public-relations exercise, unless there are specifics. If it is serious,

"The treatment of the capital market requires a widespread variety of measures," Frenkel told reporters last night.

"We've tried to prevent immediate damage, which I hope we've done. The treatment of the bourse will be long-term," added Meridor, after he addressed a special cabinet session on the capital market.

"The premise that when fiscal expansion is practiced a central bank should exercise monetary restraint does not necessarily mean that when a government exercises budgetary restraint, the central bank should necessarily ease interest rates," Frenkel said yesterday in Caesarea.

He added that although the government has cut its budget, the macroeconomic situation is still severe, and refused to make any commitment to reducing interest rates. He stressed, in an interview with Channel 1, that the government's main battle must be the fight against inflation.

JORDANIAN

it will be welcomed by all. So far, the whole government's approach looks to the Palestinians like flim-flam."

It is precisely because of this concern over being manipulated that PA President Yasser Arafat refused a meeting with Gold on Monday, sources insisted.

Sources also said that during the last meeting between Gold and Abbas a few weeks ago Abbas responded to Israel's call for "reciprocity" by offering to hold talks in which each side would put forward its own view on the other's violations of the peace accord. However, no such encounter has been held. Moreover, there has been no meeting to discuss alleged Palestinian violations in Jerusalem.

PLAN

Meridor said last night on Channel 1 that the government would not interfere with the bourse.

The feeling on the stock exchange is that the intervention plan will not prevent people from pulling money out of provident funds.

Even before the opening of the stock market yesterday, traders said the new measures would have little effect on the share market crisis and called for lower interest rates, a view shared by Manufacturers Association President Dan Propper.

Gad Haker, head of the international department at Betucha Securities and Investments, said the stock market opened yesterday with a surplus supply of shares, but the fall in prices was less dramatic than in the past few weeks.

"Shares are falling as a result of the fall in shares on Wall Street yesterday and because of the continuing crises in the local stock market. But the falls are less

intense than in the past week," he said.

Bond prices have also been falling, as provident funds faced with massive redemptions have been forced to sell bonds and stocks. The falling bond prices have pushed up yields to 10-year highs.

Treasury officials said that to counter the inflationary effects of buying bonds, the Bank of Israel will re-absorb money put into the economy by selling short-term bonds.

Koor CEO Benny Gaon called on Netanyahu to meet immediately with Yasser Arafat. Gaon, in a lecture delivered at the Fourth Caesarea Conference, where Israel's leading economic and business figures meet annually, said that a failure on the part of the government to quickly restore the peace process would ultimately generate an economically counterproductive sense of uncertainty.

Amotz Asa-El contributed to this report.

Stock market report, Page 9

WASHINGTON

Washington insisted that Netanyahu did not receive a proper economic briefing before his meeting last week in the US with World Bank head James Wolfensohn about the group's current economic assistance programs to the Palestinians and other regional initiatives. Therefore, the session was essentially wasted, the officials said.

Arieh O'Sullivan contributed to this report.

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Haredi family fears for future after father is excommunicated

HAIM SHAPIRO

WHAT happens to a haredi family when the husband is excommunicated by a rabbinical court?

The story of one Tel Aviv-area family began about four years ago, when a brother of the excommunicated man became involved in divorce proceedings. After a rabbinical court levied a monthly support payment which was more than the brother could pay, the brother disappeared. The rabbinical court appears convinced that the rest of the family knows where the brother is.

What followed, according to the wife of the excommunicated man, was a series of orders to appear at various rabbinical courts around the country. Whenever a family member failed to appear, the court would order them arrested. Family members also found that the rabbinical courts had imposed liens on their homes.

"My mother-in-law is 80 years old. She's a survivor of Auschwitz. After she was arrested, she had a heart attack," the wife said.

Her husband, in an effort to keep from being arrested, filed a petition with the High Court of Justice against the rabbinical court. It was, she admitted, a very serious step to for a haredi man to take, but it resulted in an end to the arrest and lien orders from the rabbinical courts.

Last week, however, the family was shocked to find huge posters hanging in their neighborhood and other haredi neighborhoods with what appeared to be a copy of a *herem* (excommunication order) issued by the Jerusalem Rabbinical Court. The *herem* was signed by Rabbi Ezra Basri, president of the Jerusalem Rabbinical Court, and Rabbinical Court judges Shlomo Fisher and Nehemia Goldberg.

The *herem* warns all Jews not to come within four cubits of the man involved, not to have any dealings with him, talk to him or count him for a *minyan* in the synagogue. This past Shabbat, she said, the family went elsewhere, and the husband attended the synagogue of his haredi community. The husband has also refrained from riding the bus or shopping in any neighborhood stores, she said, adding that she has gotten the cold shoulder from a few of her neighbors.

"This thing could easily destroy my marriage, but I respect my husband for his courage. Can they destroy my life because of another woman's life? You'd think this was the Middle Ages," the wife said.

Rabbi Eli Ben-Dahan, the director of the rabbinical courts, yesterday denied any knowledge of a *herem* levied against the family.

Har-Shefi: Amir spoke of killing Rabin, but no one took it seriously

RAINE MARCUS

HUNDREDS, and perhaps 1,000 people knew of Yigal Amir's plan to kill prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, Margalit Har-Shefi said in Tel Aviv District Court yesterday.

"Yigal Amir told hundreds of people, maybe even 1,000, of his ideas to kill Rabin," she said. "I thought he was just talking but wouldn't do anything. He was known as a demagogue."

Har-Shefi was summoned as a defense witness in the trial against convicted assassin Yigal Amir, his brother Haggai, and Dror Adani. They are charged with plotting to kill Rabin, plotting to harm Palestinians and their property, and illegally possessing and manufacturing ammunition and explosives.

Her testimony, requested by Haggai Amir's lawyer Moshe Meroz, had been postponed to give her the opportunity to consult with her lawyer, Yair Golan. Golan had been against her testifying, to prevent her from incriminating herself.

The judges told Har-Shefi that the court would protect her from implicating herself in criminal offenses, and disqualified many of the defense's questions yesterday.

Har-Shefi was arrested shortly after Rabin's murder and kept in custody on suspicion of failing to prevent the murder and conspiracy charges. Evidence against her has been transferred to the District Attorney's Office, but she has not yet been indicted and it is still unclear if she will be charged.



Margalit Har-Shefi, accompanied by her mother, leaves Tel Aviv District Court yesterday after testifying.

(Alan Row/Israel Sun)

She testified yesterday after Haggai Amir took the stand.

When asked how Haggai Amir had reacted to his brother's idea to kill Rabin, Har-Shefi answered that Haggai had said: "Stop with the rubbish."

Prosecutor Penina Guy said that under investigation Har-Shefi had

added, "It's not practical," to the statement.

Har-Shefi also said that Yigal Amir had asked her if she was interested in forming an underground organization with him.

Har-Shefi said that she initially thought Amir's intention was to distribute anti-government

leaflets and posters, but nothing more extreme, adding that she objected to any violent or illegal acts.

When asked how she interpreted Yigal Amir's statements, she replied, "A dog that barks does not bite."

Har-Shefi said she could not

remember seeing Adani at meetings in different settlements in the territories.

She also told the court that Yigal Amir had asked her if she could find out how to break into weapons warehouses and if she knew chemists who could prepare bombs.

MKs facing serious charges could be prevented from chairing committees

LIAT COLLINS

AN MK charged with crimes involving moral turpitude might be prevented from holding certain positions within the Knesset, the Knesset House Committee ruled yesterday.

The decision was taken against the background of the case of MK Raphael Pinhasi (Shas), although it would not retroactively strip Pinhasi's right to chair the House Committee. The decision is being challenged by Meretz MKs because Attorney-General Michael Ben-Yair has asked his political immunity be lifted to face charges of fraud and

falsifying documents. The decision could affect, however, the right of Avi Yehzekel (Labor) to chair the Knesset Economics Committee next term and Likud MK Meir Sheerit's appointment as deputy speaker.

"The committee yesterday made a ruling on the subject which, as acting chairman Michael Eitan (Likud) noted, is not dealt with in either the Knesset House Rules or legislation. The decision allows

for the committee to prevent an MK from temporarily holding certain positions or limiting the fields an MK can deal with while facing serious charges.

"The decision is an attempt to renew the public's confidence in the House by showing that MKs are prepared to accept certain restrictions," Eitan said. "At the same time, it is important to recall that a person is innocent until found guilty and that an MK is a public representative and every attempt must be made not to harm the public which elected him."

ACRI: Omer mayor has no right to ban Aviv Geffen performance

EVELYN GORDON

OMER Mayor MK Pini Badash (Likud) has no right to ban a performance by Aviv Geffen in his town, the Association for Civil Rights in Israel said in a petition to the High Court of Justice yesterday.

The petition also challenged Badash's decision to forbid Geffen's supporters to post a satirical poem against Badash on municipal bulletin boards.

Omer has a municipal amphitheater which it rents out to various performing artists during the summer. According to the petition, Geffen

was the only performer whom Badash refused to allow to perform. In an interview with Rafi Reshef on Channel 2, Badash explained his reasons as follows:

"A man who did not serve in the army, who calls our youth the 'screwed-up generation,' who calls the prime minister a drunk... he is not on our list of priorities for the performances we will bring this summer," Badash said.

The petition charged that both the decision itself and Badash's refusal to post the satirical poem violate the basic principle of freedom of expression. Furthermore, it said, Badash had no authority by law to take either of these actions.

"Mayors are not in charge of the morality and artistic tastes of their residents," the petition concluded. "A mayor may, like any other citizen, express his opinion, and warn that a certain person is corrupting our youth, but he cannot use his governmental authority to force his opinion on the general public."

MKs protest plan to stop distributing gas masks

LIAT COLLINS

THE Knesset Interior Committee yesterday called on the government to reconsider its decision to stop the distribution of gas masks to the public.

Committee chairman Saleh Tarif (Labor) said he is "deeply concerned by the decision as long as the threat of war still hangs over our heads."

OC Home Front Maj.-Gen. Shmuel Arad told the meeting the gas mask kits are the principal means of defense against non-conventional weapons.

"Since the Gulf War there has been a change in perception and Israeli residents have defensive equipment worth NIS 954 million," he said. "Israel has the best equipped citizens in the world.

The gas masks cost NIS 120 million a year, NIS 20 per person." The Finance Ministry's Uzi Levy, deputy head of the budget division, said the cost of NIS 120 million a year was reason to abolish the distribution, as the government had decided. He said the Defense Ministry was prepared "with active not passive measures."

Tarif said stopping the distribution would affect the personal security of residents, "and is above economic considerations." MK Ze'ev Boim (Likud), who is also mayor of Kiryat Gat, expressed concern at increased unemployment in the town if the factory which produces the gas mask kits there lays off workers.

It is a clear conflict of interest for former energy minister Gonen Segev to be employed by the Eisenberg group, the Movement for Quality Government in Israel protested in a letter to Attorney-General Michael Ben-Yair yesterday.

During his term as energy minister, Segev wrote a letter to the Jordanian government informing it that Shoul Eisenberg was interested in a joint venture with the Jordanians, and that he (Segev) supported the idea. Eisenberg's proposal was for a power station run on natural gas to be set up in Jordan, which would sell electricity to Israel.

In its letter, the movement noted that according to a legal opinion written by Ben-Yair himself, a

cooling-off period is necessary for ministers and deputy ministers who wish to be employed by private companies with which their ministries worked, even though technically, the civil service regulations on this subject do not apply to ministers. This opinion was written to prevent situations such as Segev's, in which a minister helps a certain company with the goal of getting a job with it afterward, the movement said.

It asked Ben-Yair to order Segev to wait for an appropriate period before joining the Eisenberg group. The movement did not specify what length of time it would deem appropriate, leaving this to Ben-Yair's judgment. In the civil service, the standard cooling-off period is one to two years.

Material to reduce complications from abdominal surgery introduced here

JUDY SIEGEL

AN imported artificial membrane that promises to eliminate many of the adhesions resulting from abdominal and pelvic surgery was used here for the first time yesterday.

The successful operation was performed on a middle-aged man at Hadassah-University Hospital in Jerusalem's Ein Kerem.

The Health Ministry recently approved Seprafilm, which was developed by the US biotechnology giant Genzyme. It was meant to deal with the problem of adhesions, in which tissues stick together after surgery and have to

be separated in subsequent operations.

Adhesions occur in 60 percent to 90% of patients undergoing abdominal operations and the majority of those having pelvic operations. In addition, seven out of 10 of all bowel obstructions are due to post-surgical adhesions, and many female infertility problems result from them.

Genzyme-Israel managing director Ze'ev Zelig said the material is expected to save the health system many hundreds of repair operations

and thousands of hospitalization days each year. It will also make unnecessary many drug treatments for bowel obstruction and significantly improve the quality of life of patients.

Dr. Petachia Reisman, a senior surgeon at the hospital who did specialized training in the US and was part of the team that developed Seprafilm, performed the surgery at Hadassah.

Clinical trials in the US showed that Seprafilm eliminated adhesions in half of all surgical patients and significantly reduced their severity in the rest.

New efforts to prosecute those responsible for traffic accidents

HAIM SHAPIRO

JUST over a month ago, Victor Kleinberg's wife was killed on an Israeli road. Kleinberg has come here from Belgium to see that justice is done and to try to prevent other such deaths.

His wife's death appears to be even more senseless than the usual road accident. Kleinberg's wife, Mahnouch Farouhi, a Belgian resident who had been visiting here, had been in a car with her friend, Michal Koren of Ma'ale Adumim, when an earthmoving truck entered the Ramot Road.

The truck made a turn that was too wide, crushing the car and killing the two women.

The truck driver, Faddel Mohammed, 23, of Ramallah, did not have a valid Israeli driver's license. In fact, he had no permission to be in Israel at all.

According to police, he was smuggled in from the West Bank every day by his employer, S.

Barashi. Kleinberg, who arrived in Israel this week, said that he wants to make sure that all those who are responsible for his wife's death are found guilty and punished. He said he wants to make sure that not just "the man on the bottom," the driver, is punished.

Shortly after the accident, Kleinberg read in *The Jerusalem Post* that the Transportation Ministry's Road Safety Administration was recommending prosecuting employers as well as drivers when the latter were involved in fatal accidents.

According to information which Kleinberg succeeded in gathering, it would appear that the move would be particularly applicable in this case.

Kleinberg found that not only did Mohammed have no valid permit to work in Israel, and no license recognized by the Israeli

authorities, the Palestinian document which he showed the police was for a 15-ton truck. Mohammed had been driving a 40-ton truck loaded with 70-tons of earth.

"This shows me the employer was trying to cut costs. He hired someone young and inexperienced so he could pay him peanuts," Kleinberg said.

In addition, Kleinberg said, the video of the accident scene showed that there were no signs on the highway warning that work was being carried out there.

There was a plastic barrier on the road, but it was empty, not filled with water to give it an effective weight, he added.

According to the Jerusalem District police spokesman, Mohammed's files have been passed on to the State Attorney.

The files accuse him of causing a death through negligence and of illegally staying in Israel. A file accusing the employer of illegally employing a resident of the West Bank has been transferred to the State Prosecutor.

Police are still investigating the possibility of also charging the employer with causing deaths through negligence.

Road Safety Administration spokesman Shmuel Bahagon said yesterday that two proposed laws that put responsibility on employers had passed their first reading in the previous Knesset.

One proposal would require anyone using a truck to have a special permit, while the other would take any truck used illegally and involved in an accident off the road for 30 days.

Bahagon said that Road Safety

Administration head Shalom Ben-Moshe has appeared before numerous Knesset committees in an effort to see that both proposed laws go through the legislative process.

He added that Ben-Moshe is also pushing for a third law which would specifically hold employers criminally responsible if their trucks were used illegally and involved in an accident.

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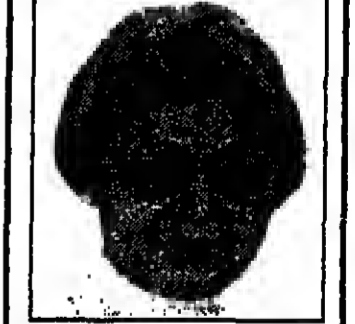
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Algerians struggle through strife

LAMINE GHANMI
ALGIERS

SHOPS in the run-down capital of Algeria, their bare shelves for so long a symbol of the violence and economic strife shaking this North African country, now show new signs of wealth.

But on the streets outside, children beg - a new sight too in Algeria where a former egalitarian nationalist system offered most people basic salaries and an adequate meal.

The killings in the conflict between Moslem fundamentalists and government security forces, which brought road blocks and identity checks to slow the heartbeat of the city, appear now to take second place in the concerns of ordinary Algerians.

Tight censorship has done nothing to jam "radio trottoir" - the "pavement radio" of rumor and fact that keeps Algerians better informed than their government would often like.

"Five men were killed this morning near al-Katar hospital in Algiers," a bearded young man told his boss at an airline office as he checked the computer to find a seat for a former general stranded by the strike of the state airline Air Algérie.

"How were they killed?" she asked after glancing around.

"They had their throats cut," he replied.

Farid, the youngest employee, added: "Yesterday, eight people were gunned down at a fake road-block in Algiers."

But many Algerians appear to agree with the government view of a relative improvement of the security throughout Algeria. They see its pledge to fix the economy, however, as mere lip service for most people.

While new cars jostle for space with ancient buses crammed with ordinary Algerians struggling to get to work, women pick through fruit and vegetables at prices which leave their baskets half empty. Inside city bread shops, the resilience of this nation of 28 million people is tested and an air of gloom is evident.

Prices of even basic goods have skyrocketed since the authorities, spurred by creditor countries who bailed them out with rescheduling much of \$31 billion in foreign debt, moved to end subsidies and introduce a market economy.

Economic reality - opportunities for some, a battle for survival for others - dominates daily life in this overcrowded capital of four million people.

"Two years ago, the terror was 10-sided but now the situation is moving towards settling," said Hassan Imazighi, a young man

riding the wave of get-rich-quick opportunities.

"The worst was not the fire which seemed to engulf all the country especially in 1994 and early 1995 but the feeling that everything was in a state of panic and chaos," said his wife Farida, working with him in their new private communications business.

An estimated 50,000 people have been killed in the conflict which erupted after the authorities, in January 1992, canceled a general election which Islamists were poised to win.

But as a sign perhaps of a more relaxed atmosphere, a taxi driver, engrossed in debate with this reporter and an Algerian sharing the vehicle, shot straight through one road block enforced by Republican guard paramilitary in eastern Algiers.

This reporter got a real fright. Soldiers on road blocks have killed several people for similar errors, opening up with Kalashnikovs that leave little time to apologize. The driver reversed, the apologies were accepted.

At the city's press center, home of several big newspapers, a woman journalist phoned home to say she would be late because staff had been "told that a hit-squad was lurking for a high-publicity target."

"It is a great deal of progress, as they can now tell us in advance about possible attempts by terrorists," she said.

Over 50 journalists, whose work was severely censored, have been killed during the conflict, branded by fundamentalist groups as supporters of the government. Many more have fled abroad.

"The press center was in the past three years a mourning place as slain colleagues' coffins were brought before burial. The same place will be a rallying point for life and freedom," said one journalist, referring to a strike planned for next week to protest at the authorities' shutting down of the French-language newspaper *La Tribune*.

And earlier this month, more than 100,000 Algerians, most of them young men and girls, swarmed Algiers's main leisure complex of Riad el-Feth to dance and sing to Rai music until the early hours of Algeria's Independence Day.

"Two years ago in the western city of Oran, Moslem guerrillas shot dead Cheb Hossni, a leading Rai singer. Others went abroad."

"Despite the thousands of dead, the young are trying to take up pleasure and joy again ... overcoming our fears of the violence," said a young girl who traveled from Oran to attend. (Reuters)

Lebanon's Christians face painful choice

ANALYSIS
ANDREW TARNOWSKI

LEBANON'S Christians, relieved by the acquittal of a Christian warlord for the bombing of a church in which 11 people died, face an agonizing decision: Should they boycott next month's parliamentary polls because of an election law that discriminates against them?

Anti-Syrian Christian opposition leaders have called on people to repeat the boycott of the 1992 elections, denouncing the law as illegal and the voting as "the most dangerous forgery aimed at erasing the Lebanese homeland."

The 1992 boycott was a massive protest by most Christians and many Moslems against the presence of 35,000 Syrian troops in Lebanon, Damascus's influence over the government and the perceived unfairness of election arrangements.

But the result of the boycott was a pro-Syrian parliament and there has been a growing realization on the part of the Christian opposition that the boycott simply excluded them from national affairs.

The decision by Christian voters whether or not to take part in the polls will show their willingness to accept that their community's position was subordinated by the 1975-90 civil war and that the Syrians now play the dominant role in the country.

The acquittal last week of Samir Geagea, who could have been sentenced to death if found guilty for the 1994 church bombing, relieved fears by the Christian minority that he might become the only civil-war militia leader to be executed. But newspapers pointed out that he still remains the only sectarian chief to face trial, while pro-Syrian chiefs said to have dirtied their hands in the war hold high office.

The court convicted four members of Geagea's militia for involvement in the

bombing, which it said was ordered and planned by the Israelis.

Geagea is serving two life sentences for murder and the opposition political party he formed after the war from his Lebanese Forces militia was outlawed following the church bombing.

A Beirut newspaper said the election law imposed on Christian voters the same kind of political discrimination that Geagea has experienced.

"Christian candidates are practically at the mercy of Moslem voters, with the contrary never being true," the French-language Beirut daily *L'Orient-Le Jour* said.

Christian opposition leaders in exile - ex-president Amin Gemayel and former army commander Gen. Michel Aoun - joined right-wing National Liberal Party leader Dori Chamoun in issuing the boycott call a

day after the election law was passed. The law, approved last week by parliament, is tailor-made to ensure the election of Druse leader Walid Jumblat, an ally of the Syrian-backed government, at the expense of the Christians.

Voters were torn between the temptation of repeating the 1992 boycott, which did not bring the desired results, and taking part in a vote with only "hypothetical advantages," *L'Orient-Le Jour* said.

Mount Lebanon, home to the Druse and the only region where Christians have an overwhelming majority, is the only one of Lebanon's five governorates that the law divides into smaller constituencies, creating districts with Druse majorities that can elect Jumblat.

The law has been widely denounced as unconstitutional and contrary to the Taif accord of 1989, which set out the political settlement which ended the civil war and ruled that all constituencies should be based on governorates. (Reuters)



Brunei Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah receives his subjects during the investiture ceremony in conjunction with his birthday at the state palace in Bandar Seri Bagawan on Monday. The sultan, the world's richest man, celebrated his 50th birthday with Prince Charles and Michael Jackson among his guests. (Reuters)

Egyptian police kill terrorist leader

EGYPTIAN police said they shot dead a wanted militant Islamist leader this week on the platform of a railway station in southern Egypt.

The Interior Ministry said in a statement that Sayyed Abderrahman Mustafa, 28, was standing alone on the platform in Abu Tig waiting to meet someone when the police ambushed him. It said Mustafa shot back but there were no police casualties.

The statement described Mustafa as the head of the military wing of the militant Gama'a al-Islamiya (Islamic Group) in the southern province of Assiut. He was allegedly in charge of the military training of Gama'a members and had taken part in 20 attacks, in which 35 civilians and policemen were killed.

Police suspect Mustafa took part in an attack on a farm in nearby Badari in February this year, killing eight Christians. Mustafa, once a trainee teacher, comes from the Badari area.

Police meanwhile seized copies and a printer's proof of a book on the prophets of Islam called blasphemous by Moslem clerics.

Three thousands copies of *A Psychoanalysis of the Prophets* had been sold before Al-Azhar, a university and religious complex that is a major seat of Islamic learning, deemed it disrespectful to religious figures.

Government officials have maintained Al-Azhar cannot ban books and can only recommend. But its recommendations are usually followed, especially concerning books with religious themes.

The book was seized for giving incorrect descriptions of the characters of religious prophets, said a police source, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The author, Abdullah Kamal, was summoned for questioning. Kamal, a journalist for the liberal magazine *Rose el-Youssef*, said it would now be up to the courts to judge if the book should be banned.

He defended his work as "academic research based on other books found on the market, which are not banned" and are about the prophets' lives. Islam considers earlier prophets - from Abraham to Moses and Jesus - to be among the faith's prophets, along with Mohammed. (Reuters)

Bahrain, Qatar take dispute to Saudis

BAHRAIN'S crown prince said his country was prepared to fight to the death to defend territory that is also claimed by neighboring Qatar.

The Hawar islands are part of Bahrain and "we will not allow this fact to be lost under the cover of border claims and disputes," said Sheikh Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.

"We are ready at any time to prove it with facts, defend it and die for its sake," he said during a meeting of high-ranking defense officials, the official Gulf News Agency reported.

Sheikh Hamad termed the Qatar claims on the islands "expansionism ... which does not have any limit."

The crown prince's comments came as the emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa, was in Saudi Arabia to discuss the dispute.

Saudi Arabia neighbors both countries and has been seeking to act as a mediator in the dispute.

Qatar took the case to the International Court of Justice in 1991 after an earlier round of Saudi mediation failed. But Bahrain has rejected the court's

jurisdiction. Besides the Hawar islands, the dispute is also over territorial water boundaries and the Zubara land strip in Qatar, where the Bahraini people's ancestors lived 200 years ago.

Relations between Bahrain and Qatar have been strained since 1986 when a Qatari helicopter seized 29 workers of a Dutch company sent by Bahrain to the disputed Fasht al-Dibal reef to build a Bahraini coast guard station there.

Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Bahrain are partners in the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council, a political and economic alliance whose other members are Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates and Oman.

Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani was reported to have been joined in the Red Sea port city of Jiddah by Bahrain's prime minister, Sheikh Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa.

Saudi Arabia, the dominant power in the GCC, has its own border dispute with Qatar. Its oil-rich Eastern Province is linked to the island nation of Bahrain by a causeway. (AP)

Saudis hinder US military moves

A sharp split between the US and Saudi Arabia has emerged, with a top Saudi prince saying he opposes moving American soldiers to new housing which the Pentagon says would be less vulnerable to terrorists.

The comments by Defense Minister Prince Sultan came during a visit to Saudi Arabia by FBI director Louis J. Freeh, who continued to press Saudi officials to grant his agents access to all evidence gathered on the bombing of a US military housing complex in Dhahran last month.

In the latest report on evidence, official sources said this week they have found the getaway car used by the terrorists, who killed 19 US servicemen and injured hundreds of people in the June 25 attack. They said the white Chevrolet Caprice Classic was found in Dammam, 10km. from Dhahran, a few days after the bombing.

There was no explanation as to why authorities did not disclose the discovery of the car until now.

FBI agents investigating the truck-bomb attack have been restricted to interviewing US airmen and sifting debris at the US military complex, a US law enforcement official complained.

Freeh continued to press Saudi officials at the highest levels to grant his agents access to all evidence gathered on the bombing.

Freeh's mission to resolve US-Saudi differences came as a US law enforcement official, requesting anonymity, explained some of the restrictions put on the more than 70 FBI agents sent to the Arab kingdom.

"We haven't been allowed to talk to people in the community. We've been restricted to the US post and interviewing the US airmen," one US law enforcement official said. "They basically all say they were asleep, heard the explosion and saw no one."

The US agents want to conduct a full investigation, including talking with Saudi witnesses and anyone detained by the Saudis for

questioning in the attack, the official said.

FBI agents in Dhahran's Khobar Towers complex, home to 3,713 US servicemen, have analyzed rubble, debris from the truck and the bomb itself, but they have been hampered by a lack of forensic equipment on site.

The FBI teams left so swiftly for Saudi Arabia after the blast they could not bring much equipment with them and have had to borrow analytical instruments from the US Air Force, the official said.

Meanwhile, a US Embassy source in Riyadh said Americans living in the kingdom had received more phone calls threatening attacks from people speaking Arabic or broken English.

A recorded embassy hotline message warned US citizens living in the kingdom: "Individual Americans and companies in Saudi Arabia have been receiving phone calls threatening further attacks."

Last week, Pentagon

spokesman Kenneth Bacon said it was virtually certain that some of the 1,500 US troops based in Riyadh will be moved to Saudi bases more easily defended against terrorists.

"The question is when and how many" will be moved, he said. Saudi Arabian officials squashed the idea, however.

"If we have to move them from where they live, this means we have to prepare other accommodation for them," Prince Sultan said. "This is not right [because] security has been achieved, the rule of law prevails, and incidents that happen in our country now are only one out of a million compared to what happens in other countries," he said.

It was not clear how the prince's statements would affect the American plans, but housing for US troops in Saudi Arabia is provided almost entirely by the Saudi government and its cooperation would be required in any plan to move troops. (AP)

Italian judge puts off terrorist hearing

A judge in Rome this week postponed a hearing to decide whether two Algerians and an Iranian should stand trial for the murder of an Iranian opposition figure in the Italian capital in 1993.

Judge Alberto Macchia said he was putting off the hearing until September 25 because one of the suspects had not been officially notified of the session.

Mohammad Hussein Naghdi was killed by automatic weapon shots fired by assailants riding on a motorbike as he was being driven to his office in Rome, where he served as representative in Italy of the National Council of the Iranian Resistance, which is part of the leading Iranian opposition group, the Mujahedeen Khalq.

The group blamed Iran's government for the killing; Tehran blamed the killing on disputes between opposition groups.

The Iranian Embassy in Rome "categorically denies any involvement by an Iranian diplomat" in the slaying, a statement said.

According to court records, the three defendants are Adda Khatem and Salah Pidgebit, both Algerian; and Alireza Iazdi Neyad, an Iranian. Italian newspapers say the three are living in Italy but are not in custody. Lawyers for the victim's relatives, including his widow, Fermina Moroni, an Italian, said they would urge the Italian foreign ministry to pressure Iranian authorities in hopes of bringing to justice a fourth person considered a suspect according to Italian press reports - an Iranian whose diplomatic immunity would keep him from being prosecuted. (AP)

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A pillar of peace

IN his speech before the United States Congress last week, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called reciprocity one of the three "pillars of peace." This particular pillar has been received with some trepidation by the US administration — concerned that Netanyahu will use the Palestinian Authority's failure to honor signed agreements as a means to halt the peace process — and largely derided by the opposition here, who, while in power, let the Palestinians break their commitments with impunity.

It is difficult to understand the opposition to the prime minister's demand that reciprocity be taken seriously. Just because Israel is the strongest political and economic power in the Middle East, as former foreign minister Ehud Barak argued in *The Jerusalem Post* on Monday, does not mean it should allow its Arab partners to renege on signed agreements. Agreements are reciprocal by definition; reciprocity should be a given, not a controversial demand.

Netanyahu's opponents say that they are not opposed to the principle of reciprocity, only to it being used as an excuse to halt the peace process. Instead of complaining, these critics should realize that the concept of reciprocity could be a force that binds the prime minister to the peace process in two important respects.

First, all the Palestinian Authority must do to force the new prime minister to comply with the Oslo accords — agreements be roundly attacked during the election campaign — is to abide by them more fully themselves. The sure-fire way for Oslo proponents to propel the Netanyahu government down their road is to encourage Palestinian compliance.

Second, reciprocity is a two-way street. It is time to take inventory of aspects of the accords that Israel has been slow to implement.

While Israel's failure to redeploy in Hebron is the most significant example of non-compliance — and the government cannot claim for much longer that it is studying the issue before making a decision — there are also the matters of opening Israeli agricultural markets to Palestinian goods, and "safe passage" between Gaza and the other cities under PA control.

Removing agricultural trade barriers would be a good place for Israel to show that it takes reciprocity seriously. There is no security issue here, and it dovetails nicely with Netanyahu's free-market thrust. Indeed, there is a strong suspicion that the blocking of

Palestinian agricultural goods is more economic protectionism, pushed for by Israeli farmers, than anything else.

During the height of the closure, for example, special dispensations were granted to import Gaza-produced textile products, because Israel's industrialists needed them, while Gazan fruit and vegetables were banned. Liberalizing agricultural trade — while maintaining quality standards — would benefit both the Israeli consumer and the Palestinian economy.

The essence of Oslo's interim phase was Israeli withdrawal from the cities in the territories in exchange for the Palestinians ceasing acts of terror and becoming partners in combating terrorism. Israel, having withdrawn from the Gaza Strip and six of the seven cities in the territories, has complied with the lion's share of its side of the bargain.

The PA, though not engaging in terrorism itself, is still far from upholding provisions critical to the curbing of terrorism by others, such as the confiscation of arms and disarming of militias. The PLO Covenant has not been amended to recognize Israel's right to exist. Provisions providing for the extradition of captured terrorists have been openly flouted. And PA offices and police continue to operate in Jerusalem.

Under the previous government, there was a tacit agreement that neither side would put its foot down regarding the 100% compliance of the other. While there is a certain pragmatism to this approach, it has gotten out of hand. It is time for both sides to improve their compliance with the interim agreement before moving forward.

While the PA has considerably further to go, Israel's new government should lead the way by liberalizing trade with the Palestinians immediately and announcing its intention to abide by other provisions of the agreement that the previous government did not. Such moves, coupled with yesterday's announcement that the closure on the territories will be eased — a move which is necessary to both easing the Palestinians' economic plight and reducing the pressure and frustration which inevitably builds up during such a long period of mass unemployment in the territories — could smooth the prime minister's visit to Egypt tomorrow.

Netanyahu should use this visit to show Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak that Israel intends to meet its obligations, thus putting the ball squarely in the Palestinians' court. The concept of reciprocity, he can tell his host, will be employed to move the peace process forward, not stall it.

Unnecessary strike

TODAY'S strike, called by the Histadrut, is more than pointless. It is a startling reminder of the intellectual and moral bankruptcy of Israel's labor movement. Of the estimated 400,000 workers expected to obey the call to stay home from work — or if not stay home, enjoy a day at the beach or a barbecue in a public park — few, if any, have any real idea as to the strike's purpose.

This is not surprising, because there is no real reason behind the walkout, except for the fact that it is a Likud government, and not Labor, that is trying to clear up the economic mess left behind by the previous government. As the stock market slump shows all too clearly, the economy needs more than an aspirin if it is to recover from the fiscal irresponsibility of the past four years.

The budget cuts decided on by the government were not drawn out of thin air. Some were part of the "100 days plan" prepared by a team of Shimon Peres's advisers, who were given a brief to prepare the next Labor government's policy guidelines. Like the present incumbents of the Prime Minister's Office and the Treasury, Peres's aides proposed cutting child benefits and school bursas; they even suggested raising the mandatory retire-

ment age from 65 to 70.

But Labor lost the election; instead it is the Likud which is introducing these vital, budget-cutting measures. If these measures are so dangerous to the working public, it is Histadrut Chairman Amir Peretz's duty to offer sensible alternatives. But all we have heard from him is the tired old rhetoric one thought had died out with the fall of the Berlin Wall. The call to "tax the rich" by placing a payroll tax on employers and eliminating the government's annual NIS 8 billion payment to the National Insurance Institute only highlights the Histadrut's lack of understanding as to how a modern economy works. Payroll taxes, although they sound good on the barricades, make hiring workers more expensive. Employers, if faced with such a levy, will look to make staff reductions, and it is the blue-collar workers, and not the rich, who will be suddenly out of a job.

Today's strike will not achieve its aim, for the government cannot afford to deviate from its economic plan. Instead, hundreds of thousands of citizens, including the elderly and infirm, will be severely inconvenienced, as the Histadrut scores what it sees as political points but in reality is just another nail in the labor federation's coffin.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

LUNATIC DRIVERS

Sir, — May I suggest a method of controlling the lunatic drivers that plague our roads and whom the police apparently have difficulty catching.

Motorists may have noticed that a car being driven recklessly often continues in this manner until it is out of sight. This means you are not the only witness to the bad driving which, no doubt, happens every time a particular driver is at the wheel of his car. It is certain that dozens of other drivers have noticed it.

I suggest that at licensing time, every driver be issued a number of forms on which he can make an adequate report of any act of dangerous driving. The authorities cannot act on the strength of just one report, but if a number of reports come in from different — independent — people, complaining about the same car, the person habitually driving that car can be traced and appropriately dealt with.

N.M. RASBASH
Ramat Efal

TENDENTIOUS REPORTING

Sir, — At best, your report "Severely ill Knesset committee heads face legal charges" (*J.P.*, July 4) demonstrates spectacular lack of judgment. Having noted the uproar about the appointment of Raphael Pihasi of Shas as chair of the Knesset House Committee, it continues, "But almost nothing was heard about the appointment of Sallah Tarif (Labor) as chairman of the Interior Committee, although he faces charges of illegal bunting and bunting without a license."

Some comparison! Consider the facts which were included in the article. Pihasi is prepared to chair the committee which will be asked to lift his immunity so that he can stand trial for fraud. By contrast, Tarif has asked that his immunity be lifted so that he can face charges for infractions of the hunting law. Need any more be said?

M.C.J. ELTON
Jerusalem.

STATUS QUO

Sir, — Let's get the facts straight. For thousands of years the laws of marriage, divorce and conversion according to Torah tradition were accepted by the observant and secular Jew alike. About 2000 years ago a division among Jews set in. The Reform Movement began in Hungary and Germany, followed by the Conservative Movement 100 years later. It was they who split traditional Judaism — and mass assimilation was the result.

Prime minister David Ben-Gurion, founder of modern Israel, did not want a split in the ranks of Judaism. He agreed that the Orthodox should control marriage, divorce and conversion.

It is the Reform and Conservative movements that are now nibbling away at these laws, and the Orthodox who are trying to maintain the status quo that has been accepted since the founding of the state.

SHMUEL GOLDSTEIN
Brooklyn, N.Y.



Let's meet halfway

YOSEF GOELL

THE PRIME minister's insistence on Arab democratization as a condition for peace was a cheap, unrealistic shot aimed at naive American sensibilities.

But that bit about reciprocity serving as the basis for a healthy and realistic peace? That was right on.

And reciprocity is the key to resolving another conflict — between secular and religious in Israel.

Unfortunately, the baredi demand to close off Rehov Bar-Ilan in Jerusalem on Shabbat was made in anything but a spirit of reciprocity. And the attempt by National Religious Party Minister of Transportation Yitzhak Levy to impose a so-called compromise — closing off the street "only" during Shabbat prayer times — is disingenuous, even cynical.

Prayer hours change with the calendar, and drivers would be driven crazy keeping track of those shifting hours.

What's more, the haredim themselves make no bones about the fact that any such "compromise" would act as the thin end of the wedge, the aim being total de facto closure of the street after a few weeks.

A little historical perspective is in order.

Before the Six Day War Bar-Ilan led only in the border with Jordanian-occupied eastern Jerusalem. Then the street was turned into a major arterial thoroughfare — as a concession for closing off Strauss and Yehzekel streets to Shabbat traffic in response to haredi demands.

Promises were made back then: There would be no further demands to close off Rehov Bar-Ilan to traffic.

Some years ago, stone-

throwing baredi goons attempted to close down the nearby road to Ramot — which they are now toutng as the reasonable alternative to a closed Bar-Ilan.

And haredi leaders are demanding the closure of the major Sderot Weizman highway that connects French Hill to Ramot and skirts the new haredi neighborhood of Shuafat Ridge.

They are also threatening to close down the western entrance to the city into which more and more haredim have been mov-

ing. And haredim in Boel Brak are demanding the closure of streets neighboring on a secular community.

THESE SALAMI tactics are taking on every appearance of a full-fledged war, fueled by the recent electoral successes of the haredi parties.

Can such a war be avoided? Only by reciprocity — that is to say, the recognition by different parts of the population that conflicting interests exist, and a readiness to reach viable compromises that could be painful.

Thus far the haredim have preferred the path of imposing their will by force when they think they have the political clout to succeed.

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Dead-end for democracy

MICHAEL KOCHIN

THERE'S something odd about the insistence that one has a fundamental right to travel down a particular street at a particular hour. Roads, after all, get closed off all the time — for repairs, for parades, for security reasons, or simply to ease traffic management.

To keep Jerusalem's Rehov Bar-Ilan open during Shabbat or close it off? That is the question, and the way the violent religious-secular conflict over it is handled could threaten the future of democracy in this country, even though the issue itself may not appear to be of such fundamental importance.

While Shabbat is a pillar of Jewish tradition, not having one's Sabbath peace disturbed by potential Sabbath violators isn't. And while freedom of movement is central to individual liberty, the individual's freedom to take the shortest route in his destination won't be found in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights or in any of Israel's basic laws.

The most important question raised by the confrontation over Rehov Bar-Ilan is: Can the people of this country and its capital really govern themselves; and can they through free and fair elections effect changes in rules — like those governing the movement of traffic — that impinge on their lives?

Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu were both elected at the head of coalitions that promised to close off Rehov Bar-Ilan to traffic during part of Shabbat.

Precisely because partial or total closure of a single street infringes on no one's basic liberties — that is to say, it raises no fundamental constitutional issues regarding freedom of religion or freedom from religion —

astonished that such a violation of basic democratic liberties has only served to fuel the violence. The comparison may sound extreme, but by looking at a place like Algeria we can see the lives lost and economic ruin brought about when the state apparatus chooses to rule despite the people.

After more than 200 years of modern democracy, one lesson ought to be clear to those who fancy themselves the governors of the people. No amount of police violence will suffice to overturn the will of the people when the people aim to exercise their democratic rights.

If decisions, democratically arrived at, are insufficient to change state policy, the citizens have no recourse but to implement those decisions beyond the realm of law. And that it is only a question of time — and of blood — until they do implement them.

It would be both perverse and tragic if the conflict over the closure of one single street proved sufficient to push this country over from mob violence into revolutionary violence. I don't think it is sufficient.

Yet if the administrative apparatus of the state cannot realize the people's liberty of self-government in a small matter, a larger issue will soon similarly arise. And if and when it does, it will reignite the same sort of conflict, only this time with greater violence.

The state's capacity for brutal violence notwithstanding, such a conflict will eventually overturn those who seek to govern by thumbing their noses at democracy.

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In the raw

D'VORA BEN SHAUL

EVERYBODY loves nature. Sure they do.

The wide-open spaces, the great outdoors, getting away from it all... you know.

You load up the car with the sunscreen and the bats and the insect repellent and the water bottles and the styrofoam jug of something sweet to drink and, of course, the charcoal and the portable grill and the camping gas and a pan and a bottle of oil in case you want to make chips — oh, and the cooler-box.

Then you've got the salads and the mustard and pickles and ketchup and humous and tahina, the hamburgers and the frankfurters and the steaks and the chicken wings — and don't forget the barbecue sauce.

Oh yes — and the camera and the radio-cassette player and some cassettes and an aerosol of insecticide just in case there are ants or flies about.

Then you load up the family and the dog, and you're off to enjoy nature. Hopefully you haven't forgotten to provision yourself with some snacks for the short trip there; the children may be hungry.

In any case, how would they entertain themselves for a whole hour if they didn't have aluminum foil bags to hold out of the window? It's educational, see? The bag catches the air stream of the car, and when the pressure builds up it takes off, just the way the physics teacher explained about aerodynamics.

But the important thing is that after a few hours in a public park or planted forest with good picnic tables — or, if you live close enough, on the shores of the Kinneret — you go home happy because you've been out in nature.

Of course the nearest thing to nature you saw was the ants you sprayed away and the big black beetle you squashed; and you never heard a bird sing or the wind in the trees because a cassette was playing.

But as far as you're concerned you've been out in nature. And don't we all just love it?

UNFORTUNATELY the kind of confusion that makes people think everything out of town is nature.

We all love nature provided we have our grills and our kiosks and other conveniences...

lies at the root of some of our most serious environmental problems.

It was this confusion that led our very urban prime minister to put the Environment Ministry and the Agriculture Ministry together, although their aims and goals are totally contrary. Agriculture wants what the farmers feel is best for them; environmentalists want what is best for the total environment.

It was also this limited thinking that made the newly-appointed agriculture and environment minister decide, as one of his very first moves, to combine the National Parks Authority with the Nature Reserves Authority. Here again the conflict between the interests of the two organizations is so great as to make them the most impossible bedfellows.

The duty of the Parks Authority is to provide as much convenience and comfort as possible in scenic recreational areas throughout the country. This means more picnic areas, more cookout sites, more kiosks, wider and straighter roads, easier walking paths and all the other services visitors require.

The Nature Reserves Authority, on the other hand, is there to protect and preserve natural settings and wildlife in as natural a condition as possible. Needless to say, this isn't always compatible with more public services and accessibility.

It is no part of the purpose or responsibility of the Nature Reserves Authority to address itself to the needs of any sector of the public — except those who want to visit nature as it is.

Such a visit may not suit small children, the family dog is definitely not welcome, and your radio could scare away animals, which would be a pity. But for those who want a real taste of nature, the authority provides the minimal conditions that make this possible.

Don't get me wrong. There is a place for parks and gardens. They are lovely, and I enjoy them. But they shouldn't be confused with nature. My fear is that such confusion may, in the long run, deprive us of a rare national treasure.

The writer contributes an environmental column to The Jerusalem Post.

Handwritten note: *don't do this*

'Mister, this isn't Ethiopia'

An Ethiopian woman gives counsel to a community still coming to terms with Israeli culture, Sylvia Benjamin-Lief reports



Hannah Dessie of Haifa's Isha l'Isha with an Ethiopian immigrant support group.

(Eyal Lammam)

"Six years ago," says Carol Goldgeier, "an Ethiopian woman called us from her social worker's office to complain that her husband was abusing her. We felt that the situation was very grave, and we gave the social worker the numbers of all the shelters in Israel so that the woman could be taken out of her home immediately. Unfortunately, she did not take her social worker's advice, and went home. That evening her husband killed her and her three children."

According to Goldgeier, resource development coordinator at the Haifa Feminist Center "Isha Le'Isha," of the many women who die each year as a result of violence against them by their family members, "the number of victims among immigrants from the former Soviet Union and Ethiopia is greater than in the rest of the Israeli population. This got us thinking about a project to help Ethiopian immigrant women."

The project was initiated in 1994, and as part of its promotion campaign, Isha Le'Isha and the Rape Crisis Center (two of the four agencies of the Women's Coalition), printed a pamphlet in Amharic on its services. "We're also trying to reach out to Ethiopian community leaders who we know are essential in helping the project work," claims Goldgeier, and Hannah Dessie has played an important role in our organizations.

Dessie, who joined Isha Le'Isha in 1994, has been running support and environmental groups for Ethiopian women in five locations in the north. Two of them are in her hometown Nazareth Illit, and throughout the week she commutes to the other three: in Tira and Naveh Carmel near Haifa, and Hatzot Yasaf near Acre.

Her college education in Addis Ababa and her training at the center have qualified her to counsel women on many issues. She has lectured, held discussions, and given personal support in family, social and educational affairs including women's health, personal security, and issues of violence.

The women discuss the issue of raising children in Israel, and problems connected with schools stemming from the difficulties of immigrating to an unfamiliar society. Dessie also talks to them about sexual violence, in terms of women's legal rights. She tells them whom they can turn to, and advises them on the procedure involved in dealing with the various authorities.

At first, Dessie hesitated to speak openly, for fear publicity might do more harm than good for the women who flee to the coalition for shelter. Now, however, having become active at the rape crisis center this year, she offers her opinions.

"In Ethiopia there was no such thing as incest. The first time I ever heard of such a thing was on Israeli TV. I was shocked. Now, for the last four years, I have been hearing about such cases in my own community. It is dreadful. A shame. [Community members'] values have changed. They've lost their self-respect."

She is convinced the community's moral deterioration is due to exposure to the media here. But the coalition's coordinators tend to disagree. They regard the increased number of incoming calls to the battered women's telephone hot lines, another of the coalition's services, as irrefutable

proof of the Ethiopian community's growing awareness. The more than 150 volunteer staff who have been trained by a paid staff of 40 female social workers, or students in the profession, contribute thousands of work hours at these hot lines. They counsel women in person and over the phone, and even accompany them in crisis situations to hospitals, the courts and the police.

"It is important for women to feel comfortable in sharing their problems," says Nina Mizrahi, general coordinator of the coalition's four sections. "Before Hannah came along, we couldn't get the Ethiopian women to recognize the importance of getting together on a regular basis. Wherever she has worked, Hannah has had a high level of success. Many women participate in her meetings and there is a great sense of satisfaction."

"The women talk to her after the meetings and tell her how important it is and how they've waited for her to come. Also, they recall how things were different before she came to meet with them."

"The root of our problem is the new language and new customs," says Dessie. It is very difficult for our community. For example, marital problems in the villages in Ethiopia are solved by parents or the elders. We are very secretive

and don't share our problems with outsiders."

Married life was smoother in Ethiopia, she believes, because a woman knew her rightful place. It was in the home. If she didn't satisfy her husband's demands, he would beat her. "Nobody got killed and there were no problems, but here social workers show the woman her rights. A woman must learn a trade and work outside the home while a man waits at home alone."

Dessie says that most of the community's women have grasped Hebrew and local customs faster than have the men. She thinks this is a source of jealousy and even causes husbands to become suspicious of wives. "The social worker tells him, 'Mister, this isn't Ethiopia, this is Israel. Here you must give a woman her freedom.' He vents his frustration on his wife and children, blaming them for the social worker's intrusion and his loss of pride."

The elders too have suffered a blow to their dignity, says Dessie: "My father-in-law insists that my husband and I take him to visit his brother who lives far away. He wants us to skip work and doesn't understand our refusal and lack of respect."

Dessie tries to help mothers cope with educational problems. "The schoolchildren have a tough time

too. For example, a boy of 14 comes here, and they give him a test with a psychologist. They show him all sorts of shapes. How should he know what to do? Where could he learn this? In Ethiopia he was in a village helping his father."

She suggests that the authorities could do more to understand the Ethiopians. "A school principal might recommend special education just because she interprets a child's respectful behavior as stupidity. They don't know us," she says, referring to the social workers and the educational system, "and they don't really want to learn our culture and customs. If they want to get along with us and help us, they should try to understand us better."

However, coordinator Mizrahi is optimistic and says there has been an increased number of referrals by professionals who work with the Ethiopian community but lack the skills or the knowledge of the culture to deal with the victims themselves.

Recently the municipal department of social welfare asked Dessie to set up a women's empowerment group in the Geshet Paz district of Haifa. For Dessie, this will mean giving up more hours from her tightly scheduled day. As it is, she often returns home from work around midnight. But she feels that she cannot refuse to help where she can.

A time spot for each child

PARENTING
RUTH MASON

WE RECENTLY ran a column in which readers shared memories they had of their childhoods that made them feel most loved. By far the most popular memory was that of one-on-one time spent with a parent away from the disruptions of sibling and household demands.

This kind of time, rare in busy families, is precious to a child and helps to develop trust and self-esteem. The following are some suggestions, adapted from guidelines drawn up by the International Reevaluation Counseling Communities, on how to spend special time with you child.

1. Because it's hard for many parents to focus their attention solely on their child without thinking about the laundry that needs to be folded or that stubborn work problem they haven't been able to solve, try to limit the special time to a half hour or an hour.

It's helpful to have it at the same time each week so the child can begin to look forward to this regular block of time that is "all his." Arrange things so that you will not be interrupted by the telephone, doorbell or other family members' needs. Sometimes it works best to be out of the house.

2. Try to choose a time when you're feeling good. If you're upset, overly tired, preoccupied or just in a bad mood, it will be hard to focus attention and good feelings

on your child.

3. Let your child choose the activity (or no activity) for this period of time and try to go with it. If your son or daughter wants to play video games and you don't know what's flying, try sitting there with him and being a one-person cheering squad.

If you're spending special time with a baby, get down on the floor with him or her and just be there, while watching and paying attention to him or her.

As the guidelines state: "During special time, your child is in charge of her relationship with you. This reversal of the usual balance of power lets your child communicate with you about things she cannot entrust to you in the everyday bustle of family life with its many interruptions and speedy pace."

4. Focus on the positive in your child, the things you most love about him. Try and show that in your expression and tone. Keep letting him know, by your expression, touch and tone of voice, that you are paying attention to and enjoying his company.

5. Follow your child's lead and keep showing approval. Don't offer your own ideas or direction. This is his time. If you had a hard time during special time, find a caring friend or relative to talk to and try to get out whatever feelings you had. That should make it easier the next time. Good luck!

TV networks have the last laugh

If you can't make them laugh, you can always fake them laughing.

Pre-recorded chuckles and applause - known as sweetening - have flavored television programs for four decades despite the sour taste it leaves in some mouths.

Comedians tend to shy away from such artificial approval. Viewers gripe about being overrun by fake guffaws. One producer, Jay Tarses, has tried banning laugh tracks from his series.

But nearly every comedy ever on TV - not to mention game shows, rock and comedy concerts and awards ceremonies including the Oscars and the Emmys - has been sweetened.

The few sitcoms that tried to go without tended to be short-lived. Talk about the last laugh.

Laugh-track pioneer Carroll Pratt contends that the entertainment industry has learned to judiciously use a process it once abused.

"It's not a dishonest profession anymore," Pratt said. "The need has been seen, and since it's become more conservative I think they're [critics] living with us OK."

Only news programs, dramas and sports events are exempt from the wizards of mirth, technicians who sit at small, button-colored consoles and use 12 buttons and three levers to coax audience tapes into a symphony of glee.

Titters, chuckles, belly laughs, catcalls and more are part of the mix.

Pratt began working in the late 1950s with Charles Douglass, who invented a laugh machine while at the CBS network, and has doctored shows ranging from I Love Lucy to It's Garry Shandling's Show.

It all started honorably enough, says the semiretired Pratt. Radio listeners were used to getting laughs

with their programs, the sound of studio audiences picked up by microphones. Conventional wisdom also decreed that the communal laughter enjoyed by movie audiences was vital to making TV comedies work.

Originally, canned laughs were used to fill in when scenes were added or changed after an audience had viewed a show, Pratt said.

Later, a spate of series were filmed without an audience, like The Donna Reed Show and Father Knows Best, and required technicians to provide all the reaction.

Eventually, says Pratt, "it got out of control" as producers and writers pushed for bigger chuckles. The public began to rebel.

"The major complaint was we were laughing at things that weren't funny. Then we got letters saying we don't need some guy pushing a button to tell us when to laugh," he recalled.

The industry finally began practicing restraint - to an extent.

"In pilot seasons, things are over-laughed terribly," Pratt says, referring to the showcase period when producers try to sell shows to the networks.

There are other attempts to cheat a little.

"Some producers bring in all of their underlings and writers and get close to an audience mike and yuck it up," he said. "It's bad in one area because the writers, knowing the gag is coming, usually start laughing before it spills."

"You don't make a joke funny by laughing at it," Pratt said. (AP)

China's population: Dream or nightmare?

THE population of China has doubled in the last 40 years and now stands at 1.2 billion.

The communist regime originally preached that a huge population meant strength and in the early years of their rule discussion of birth control was taboo. But by the mid-1950s the concern felt by many economists and planners was beginning to be made public.

Professor Ma Yinchu of Peking University warned in 1957 that shortly after 2000 the population of China would reach some two billion, more than the population of the world at the time he spoke.

In fact it is unlikely to be quite as big as that. Recent press reports in China suggest the figure will be between 1.30 and 1.32 billion by 2000.

But at the time that sort of warning appeared to be taken seriously, at least in cities. Exhibitions on birth control were packed, the price of contraceptives was drastically reduced, and clinics were crowded with people seeking advice. All sorts of bizarre methods of birth control were put forward.

The tiny and ancient General Shao Linun, who had been governor of Shanxi province under Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek, told the National People's Congress, China's parliament, of a country remedy.

Women, he said, should "take 14 tadpoles less than 14 days old and swallow them live. The following day they should take 10 more and barrenness is guaranteed for five years. At the end of five years take the same dose again and you are barren for the rest of your days."

Someone wrote to the People's Daily complaining that "Chinese-made pregnancy-avoiding wrappers have weak sides and should be avoided."

But a year later, as the radical campaign dubbed the Great Leap Forward got under way, Chairman Mao Zedong displayed the flexibility of his ideology that was to become a characteristic of his later years.

He had earlier mentioned the dangers of an uncontrolled birthrate in a section of his important speech "On Contradictions," which at that time was unpub-

lished.

In 1958 Mao declared that "with every stomach comes another pair of hands" and that "under the leadership of the Communist Party miracles can be wrought as long as there are men."

Professor Ma, 77, was dismissed. Others were silenced and birth control was once more termed a rightist notion.

China was entering a four-year-long famine, which turned out to be the worst in world history, and which American demographers calculate claimed 30 million lives.

The famine was mainly the result of policies and directives from Mao as part of the Great Leap Forward. Yet he told a conference that "it will be found that the amount of arable land is not too little but too much, and it is not a question of over-population but rather a shortage of manpower."

China is still suffering from this policy. The baby boomers have now reached child-bearing age. The present leaders have pointed out that the country has to support 22 percent of the world's population on about seven percent of its

arable land.

Consequently in 1980 a strict one-child-per-family law was promulgated. Strict financial penalties are imposed on those who disobey, though for a time it was relaxed in country areas where it was highly unpopular.

The great drop in the mortality rate since the communists came to power in 1949 means that China's is an aging society.

Chinese tradition has always been that children look after their parents in old age; thus the more the better. But the Communist Party secretary of southern Guangdong Province said in an

interview that with the great increase in people's spending power, many felt they no longer had to rely on children to look after them when they were old.

Population controls have often not been imposed on ethnic minorities such as Tibetans, Uighurs and Mongols. This has meant that their numbers have grown more rapidly than those of the Han Chinese who make up 90 percent of the population.

Minorities rose by 35 percent between the 1983 census and that of 1990, while the Han increase was 11 percent. (Reuters)

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BUSINESS & FINANCE

Israel, Jordan, US launch joint investment project

KEREN MARKUZE

A trilateral pilot program aimed at supporting industrial R&D is being launched by the US, Israel and Jordan, with the goal of introducing new products and technologies into the marketplace.

Known as Project TRIDE, for Trilateral Industrial Development, the program is meant to demonstrate that public-private partnership can efficiently generate new jobs, markets, and income for all three countries.

This effort is directly connected to the peace process. "Peace must be cemented with economic realities," said Jordanian Ambassador Omar Risi. According to US Ambassador Martin Indyk, to ensure lasting peace, "it is essential for all sides to improve material circumstances of people of each region."

"This is an example of how the private sector can be the engine of the peace train, creating a more interactive, integrated Middle East market," Indyk added.

The three governments will contribute a total of \$1 million, or 50 percent of the costs. The other half will come from three private compa-

nies chosen to participate in the venture. Professional and technical support will be provided by the Israel-US Binational Industrial Research and Development Foundation (BIRD).

On the Jordanian side, the project is to be run by the Jordan Investment Promotion Corp. (JIPC) which became operational last January following the passing of legislation that entrusts the corporation with giving direct financial assistance to business ventures.

According to JIPC director-general Dr. Taleb Risi, this law was part of Jordan's continuing effort to improve its economy by emphasizing government investment rather than relying on foreign funding.

Suggested areas of trilateral investment include communication technologies, tourism, agriculture, education, and health.

"The complementarity between what the advanced Israeli society has to offer and the reasonably priced cost of production and the educated workforce we have to offer can put together a good package," said Risi.

Petition: Gov't should give better treatment to provident funds

EVELYN GORDON

THE government's preferential treatment of provident funds compared to pension funds is one of the main reasons behind the public's current flight from provident funds, a petition to the High Court of Justice charged yesterday.

The petition, filed by the Association of Banks in Israel on behalf of the banks' provident funds, demanded that the government provide the provident funds with a "safety net" similar to that given to pension funds, to guarantee provident fund investors a minimal rate of return.

The pension funds' safety net comes from special government bonds which bear a 5% interest rate - far more than the market rate. Provident funds, however, are not allowed to buy these bonds, even

though "hundreds of thousands" of people, according to the petition, use provident funds to save toward their pensions. Being at the mercy of the market, provident funds frequently achieve lower rates of return than pension funds, and this makes it impossible for them to compete with pension funds, the petition said.

This is one of the main reasons that the public is abandoning provident funds, the petition said.

At one time, the petition noted, provident funds and insurance companies also enjoyed the special bonds, but once the government stopped issuing them, the understanding was it would soon

stop issuing them to pension funds as well, said attorney Moti Arad, who prepared the petition.

However, the pension fund rescue plan approved by the government in March 1995 made it clear the government intends to continue providing pension funds with the special bonds for the foreseeable future, and this was a severe blow to provident funds, Arad said.

"This decision was one of the factors, and maybe even a central factor, in sending a message to the public that provident funds do not have the government's backing," Arad said. Insurance companies are also discriminated against in this respect, and the Association of Insurance Companies has filed a similar petition to the court which is still pending.

Porush supports expanding Jerusalem corridor across Green Line

DAVID HARRIS

DEPUTY Construction and Housing Minister Meir Porush called for the continued development of the Jerusalem corridor on both sides of the Green Line during a tour of the Beit Shemesh and Betar areas yesterday.

"In the Labor Party, as well, there are many people who say we should build in certain places that are linked to Greater Jerusalem, in order to reinforce Jerusalem," he said.

As part of the plan to extend the city's western periphery, the ministry hopes to build 60,000 new homes in Ramat Beit Shemesh, Betar, and Tzur Hadassah. Link roads would be built from Betar to Gush Etzion and Highway 39 would link the area to Jerusalem's Ein Karem entrance.

Ministry officials said yesterday they are pressuring the Industry

and Trade Ministry to construct several industrial parks in the area, including a "Silicon Valley" area at the Latrun Junction off Highway 1.

The planned expansion of Tzur Hadassah and the construction of Highway 39 has been opposed by some local residents and many environmentalists.

The proposed expansion of Betar, meanwhile, which is over the Green Line, is not linked to politics, "but merely a decision based on professional judgments," said the ministry's head of Jerusalem region Rina Zamir. She also called for improvements in the Tel Aviv to Jerusalem rail line as soon as possible which, she said, would reduce commuting time from Bet Shemesh to major employment areas.

Up to 600,000 illegal foreign workers here - official

EVELYN GORDON

THERE could be as many as 600,000 illegal foreign workers here, head of the Interior Ministry's visa department Batsya Carmon told the Knesset State Control Committee yesterday.

Carmon told the committee that while the ministry has no accurate figures on the number of illegal workers, it could be as much as six times higher than the official estimate of 100,000.

The country has become a magnet for foreign workers, who either enter on forged documents or by posing as tourists, she said.

Interior Minister Eli Suissa said, however, that since there were no accurate figures, it was irresponsible to "throw out unrealistic numbers like 600,000."

Suissa did agree that illegal foreign workers were a serious problem, however, and noted that an interministerial committee had already been set up to look for ways to solve the problem.

The committee, which includes representatives from the Interior, Finance, Internal Security, and

Labor and Social Affairs Ministries, is supposed to submit its conclusions within 30 days.

State Comptroller Miriam Ben-Porat told the committee that legislation could help in several areas. One possibility would be to require foreign workers to be paid as much as their Israeli counterparts, which would eliminate the incentive for using foreigners. Another would be to provide incentives for contractors who switched from labor-intensive to high-tech building methods.

MK Yossi Katz (Labor) suggested setting up one government body to handle the problem of foreign workers, saying the current division of labor among four different ministries creates confusion and inefficiency.

Committee chairman Ran Cohen (Meretz) promised that the committee would initiate legislation on foreign workers. He suggested a law barring anyone found employing an illegal foreign worker from receiving additional permits to hire foreign workers legally.



Givatayim Mayor Efi Stantzer (center) joins pensioners from the Dan region who demonstrated outside the Knesset against the government's plans to cut pension rights. (Yoram Meluhany)

NY stocks suffer as Dow frets over high-tech firms

BACKGROUND

FARRELL KRAMER

NEW YORK (AP) - The stock market that couldn't be stopped from falling again on Monday, leading to speculation that five-and-a-half years of gains on Wall Street had come to a end.

The Dow Jones average, the market's most widely followed index, finished Monday down 161.05 points, or 2.9 percent, at 5,349.51,

its steepest drop since March 8 and its lowest close since late January.

Concern about corporate profits triggered the slump, particularly earnings in the important technology sector. Profits drive stocks more than anything else, and word of weakness can quickly shake confidence.

Last Thursday, the Dow lost more than 83 points following an announcement late Wednesday by computer maker Hewlett-Packard that slowing orders would hurt sales and profits.

A day earlier, chip maker Motorola had announced disappointing earnings.

Ironically, no stunning earnings were reported Monday and no major economic news was released to trigger the steep plunge.

The market's weakened position - the Dow is 7.4% off its May 22 record high - suggests to many on Wall Street that new records aren't likely for some time.

"The game has changed and the tide has turned," said Stan Weinstein, publisher of the Professional Tape Reader, a market newsletter.

While it was the Dow's fourth-worst point drop, it was not even close to being among the largest falls in percentage terms. That happened Oct. 19, 1987, when the

Dow plummeted 508.00 points to 1,738.74 - a 22.6% decline.

Other market averages also saw significant erosion Monday, especially the Nasdaq composite index. The Nasdaq, home to companies like Microsoft and Intel, saw its main index lose 3.9% of its value, leaving it ahead less than 1% for the year.

For years, Wall Street has taken care of investors, moving generally and predictably upward, backed by the leadership of technology companies. The market has also snapped back powerfully after big declines.

That has begun to change. Following last Thursday's drop, the market tried to rally but failed, ending almost 10 points lower on Friday. Going back another week to July 5, traders not taking a long holiday weekend saw the Dow lose almost 115 points over concerns about a too-strong economy and possible inflation.

The next trading day the Dow followed up by losing more than 37 points.

Still, not all say the good times are entirely over. "Markets are not created by the economy, they're created by human emotion," said A. Michael Lipper, president of Lipper Analytical Services Inc., a research firm.

"We've just had such a remarkable run. This is a correction. OK. We're still up on the year."

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The tender documents may be obtained Sunday - Thursday, at the Market Research and Tenders Dept., 11 Sderot Pal-Yam, Haifa, between 9 a.m. and 12 noon, on submission of a receipt, demonstrating payment (non-returnable) of the cost of the documents into the Corporation's account at the Postal Bank. Payment slips for making such payments are obtainable at the above address (Tel. 04-8615453/4). Before purchasing the tender documents, they may be perused Sunday - Thursday, 9 a.m. - 12 noon, at the offices of the Market Research and Tenders Dept. at the above address, and at the Sales Unit, 90 Rehov Yigal Alon, Tel Aviv, Ashdar building, Entrance B, Floor 1, Tel. 03-5654679, 03-5654641.

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BARGAINS

(Continued from Page 1)

and savings plans, they suck money out of the stock market.

3) Stock markets around the world have been tumbling, led by Wall Street. As the saying goes, when Wall Street sneezes, the rest of the world catches a cold.

Why are people fleeing the provident funds?

The process is partly circular. Provident funds mostly own bonds, together with some stocks. Both have been falling lately. Fearing that their provident fund holdings are dropping in value, savers bail out for the safety of bank deposits.

What should one do with provident funds?

That depends. If you've been saving for less than 15 years you are not yet liquid, so exiting would incur a big tax bill that would far exceed any short-term losses you've incurred. If you've been in for more than 15 years, you can withdraw your money without penalty. If you don't like volatility you're probably best off; but if you can live with the ups and downs, now might not be the time to pull out.

With stock and bond prices where they are now, the funds' portfolios should provide reasonable long-term returns in the future. Locking into savings plans, the main alternative, is

safe, but your money is tied up for years at a time.

Is the market going to continue falling?

In the short term that's impossible to predict. But many observers are of the view that we're already at a level where there are a lot of bargains around.

Eventually the market will rebound. The likely trigger will be a cut in interest rates, which will happen when the Bank of Israel feels confident inflation is coming under control.

Is there anything the government can do?

Not really, beyond trying to prevent panic. Historically, efforts in various markets to artificially boost sagging stock prices have met with very limited success. Anyway, markets typically overshoot in both directions.

What should I do with my money?

That depends very much on you. If you have the patience and the nerves to be able to watch your money lose 10 percent of its value in a couple of weeks, blue-chip stocks and mutual funds look temptingly priced right now. If you don't have the temperament, savings plans and government bonds are offering fat, safe, index-linked yields.

The writer, a former business editor of the Post, now works in the investment industry.

ISRAELI MONEY MARKETS				
Patah (foreign currency deposit rates) (20.6.96)				
Currency (deposit for)	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS	
U.S. dollar (\$250,000)	4.625	4.875	5.075	
U.S. dollar (\$50,000)	4.625	4.875	5.075	
German mark (DM 200,000)	1.875	1.875	2.375	
Swiss franc (SF 200,000)	1.000	1.000	1.500	
Yen (10 million yen)				
Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates* (16.7.96)				
CHECKS AND TRANSFERS	BANKNOTES		Rep. Rates**	
Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell	
Currency basket	3.5403	3.9975	-	3.5751
U.S. dollar	3.1590	3.2100	3.10	3.1850
German mark	2.0825	2.1225	2.05	2.1225
French franc	4.9062	4.9854	4.82	4.9508
Japanese yen (100)	0.6180	0.6280	0.60	0.64
S. African rand	2.8804	2.9289	2.83	2.97
Swiss franc	1.8659	1.8959	1.83	1.93
Swedish krona	2.5417	2.5827	2.49	2.62
Norwegian krona	0.4702	0.4778	0.46	0.48
Danish krone	0.4893	0.4962	0.47	0.51
Finnish mark	0.5484	0.5592	0.53	0.58
Canadian dollar	0.6885	0.6997	0.67	0.69
Australian dollar	2.3046	2.3418	2.26	2.32
S. African rand	2.5043	2.5447	2.46	2.52
Belgian franc (10)	0.7111	0.7228	0.64	0.73
Austrian schilling (10)	1.0187	1.0381	0.99	1.05
Italian lira (1000)	2.9779	3.0229	2.92	3.07
Jordanian dinar	2.0580	2.0823	2.02	2.07
Egyptian pound	4.3900	4.4900	4.36	4.48
EU	0.3000	0.3000	0.30	0.30
Irish punt	3.8258	4.0185	3.80	4.00
Spanish peseta (100)	5.0430	5.1244	4.95	5.05
	2.4827	2.5228	2.44	2.52

*These rates vary according to bank. **Bank of Israel.
SOURCE: BANK LEUMI

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US dollar ... NIS 3.1850 +0.25%

Sterling ... NIS 4.9588 +0.70%

Mark ... NIS 2.1235 +1.92%

NEW YORK STOCK MARKET

New York market indexes

NYSE Composite	5328.18	+6.82
DJ Industrial	1080	-34.23
DJ 30	213.51	-2.29
DJ Comp	1730.27	-4.77
NYSE Volume	1,200,000,000	
NYSE Turnover	\$1.2	
S&P 100	506.88	+0.69
S&P 500	825.48	+1.34
AMEX Comp	55.28	-0.78

Other stock market indexes

NYSE 100	506.88	+0.69
NYSE Midcap	214.25	-3.71
S&P 600	648.1	+1.45
S&P 400	1022.1	+0.12
S&P 200	198.1	+1.84

Israeli stocks in NY

NYSE AMEX		
Am. Is. Pk	37	-0.42
Am. Is. Pk	37	-0.42
Am. Is. Pk	37	-0.42
Am. Is. Pk	37	-0.42
Am. Is. Pk	37	-0.42

TEL AVIV STOCKS

Multi-sided trading

Name	Price	Change
Bank Leumi	117.00	-0.4
Bank Hapoalim	118.00	-0.5
Bank Mizrahi	120.00	-0.6
Bank Leumi	117.00	-0.4
Bank Hapoalim	118.00	-0.5
Bank Mizrahi	120.00	-0.6

Two-sided trading

Name	Price	Change
Bank Leumi	117.00	-0.4
Bank Hapoalim	118.00	-0.5
Bank Mizrahi	120.00	-0.6
Bank Leumi	117.00	-0.4
Bank Hapoalim	118.00	-0.5
Bank Mizrahi	120.00	-0.6

Further market plunge prompts gov't action

TEL AVIV STOCK MARKET

FELICE MARANZ

Two-Sided index 169.36 -4.94%

Maof index 179.52 -5.21%

STOCK prices fell for the tenth straight day, plunging five percent and prompting government action designed to curb withdrawals from provident funds and to ease concern in the capital markets.

Also hurting local stocks was Monday's drop on Wall Street, said Zvi Hoffman, mutual fund manager and head of the International Department at Meitar.

Israeli shares traded in New York "went down sharply, except for Teva and Scitex," Hoffman said.

The Bank of Israel said it plans to institute a guaranteed minimum return for provident funds.

Eran Goren, fund manager at Zannex Securities said, "It's not a crisis. The market is not at 140, it's not at 120. It's the beginning of a structural change" in the way people here save and invest.

"Don't expect people to stop pulling money out of provident funds because the government forms an economic plan," he said. "They will continue to pull money out and have more control over their money."

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Euro bourses fall in response to Dow

WORLD MARKET ROUNDUP

LONDON (Reuters) - Reassuring US data and earnings news yesterday helped Wall Street rally briefly from Moody's battering and raised European houses from their lows, but a recovery on both sides of the Atlantic ran out of steam.

On currency markets, the dollar sank more than two pennies against the mark, its biggest one-day fall this year, hit by selling across the board after it dropped below 1.50 marks.

"A lot of people have been long (of) dollars and were holding out for new highs," said David Coleman, chief economist at CIBC Wood Gundy. "What we're seeing now is a bit of clearout."

The dollar hit its lowest level for three months against the mark, undermined by concern over further share market weakness in New York and a move back into the German currency.

US consumer price and industrial production figures produced no surprises and soothed fears over inflation pressures and higher US interest rates, but the relief they provided for stock markets was short-lived.

Markets in Europe and Asia had taken fright after Wall Street's fourth largest fall in points terms on Monday, hit by concern over poor corporate profits.

Financial analysts said gloom over European market prospects might be overdone, but share prices might have to fall further in the near term if investors trimmed investments until they had a clearer idea of business prospects.

"A lot of the factors driving the US are very specific to that market," said David Bowers, strategist at Merrill Lynch.

"In Europe we don't have anything like the same sort of very high earnings expectations, and my sense is that Europe should outperform in this environment," he added.

But UBS strategist Tim O'Dell cautioned: "It's a fool's game to try to call the turning points. Our view is that there is a correction under way that is not complete and the dynamics of the market are not comfortable yet."

"The (US) statistics are good but, people remain wary about the earnings figures," a Paris-based broker added.

Bargain-hunters swooped on leading US shares in early trading yesterday.

In early trading the Dow Jones industrial average was up around 45 points, reclaiming a chunk of Moody's 161-point loss, but by the time European markets closed it showed a deficit of around 11 points and continued to lose momentum.

The London stock market, Europe's largest, pulled back to its lowest levels this year but still coded with a loss of 66 points or 1.78 percent, its biggest fall for 26 months. It dropped 30 points on the previous day.

French shares ended a roller-coaster day down 1.97%, although above their lows, after a sharp late decline.

"The (US) statistics are good but people remain wary about the earnings figures," one Paris broker said. Results of key computer chip maker Intel are due after Wall Street closes.

"The market is at a crossroads. There are a lot of uncertainties and it is no good to play the hero," said Jean-Francois LeGoux, partner at SBC Brinson SA in Paris.

"This was an orderly retreat," said Josb Weibinger of BHF Bank in Frankfurt as the market there lost 3% in value.

Stocks bounce back to end up on record volume

WALL STREET REPORT

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Stocks roared back from massive losses to close higher on record volume yesterday as bargain hunters swooped in to buy battered shares.

Based on early and unofficial data, the Dow Jones industrial average ended up 9.25 points at 5,358.76 after a bungee-like swing of nearly 220 points from a high of 5,402.04 to a low of 5,182.32.

In the broader market, declining issues swamped advances 3-1 on record volume of 683 million shares on the New York Stock Exchange.

CURRENCY CROSS-RATES

MARK	STERLING	YEN	SFR	FFr
MARK	0.432025	73.6770	0.820003	3.389904
STERLING	2.313141	170.4955	1.865884	7.840389
YEN	1.356279	0.586269	1.112306	4.586230
SFR	121.8601	0.526973	89.8386	4.131858
FFr	0.294851	0.127475	21.7177N	0.241820

Prices from 23:50 local time

INFLATION MARKETS

Dollar crossrates (US)

Point	1.5980	+0.0072
D-mark	1.9484	+0.0019
S-mark	1.2185	+0.0039
Yen	0.8277	+0.0016
Swiss	0.8277	+0.0016
Can/US	0.7311	+0.0004
Aust/US	0.7311	+0.0004
Spain	0.7311	+0.0004
Italy	0.7311	+0.0004
France	0.7311	+0.0004
UK	0.7311	+0.0004
Japan	0.7311	+0.0004
Germany	0.7311	+0.0004
Italy	0.7311	+0.0004
Spain	0.7311	+0.0004
France	0.7311	+0.0004
UK	0.7311	+0.0004
Japan	0.7311	+0.0004
Germany	0.7311	+0.0004

Foreign financial data courtesy of Comstock Trading Ltd.

Futures, Options, Stocks, Bonds and Mutual Funds

34 Ben Yehuda St. Jerusalem, Tel. 02-244963, 03-575822 Fax. 02-244876

INFLATION MARKETS AND METALS

US commodities

Cocoa (Sep)	1250	-0.40
Wheat (Sep)	10.50	-0.05
Wheat (Oct)	10.50	-0.05
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Riis improves lead, Indurain concedes defeat

LOURDES-HAUTACAM, France (AP) - Denmark's Bjarne Riis firmed up his solid lead in the Tour de France yesterday, while five-time defending champion Miguel Indurain conceded he won't win a record sixth Tour.

The overall leader at the start of the 16th stage yesterday, Riis left the field behind in the final kilometers and won the 199km race with a powerful finish.

Riis stayed ahead during the steep 10km, 1,000m climb high in the Pyrenees.

Indurain, who turned 32 yesterday, lost more than two minutes to Riis and fell back to 10th place overall at 7:16 behind, virtually ending any chance the Spaniard has to become the first man to win six Tours.

"I gave it all I had today," said Indurain, who finished 12th yesterday, 2 minutes 38 seconds behind Riis. "I still hope to be on the podium in Paris, but first place will certainly go to Riis."

On the steep course lined with hundreds of thousands of fans, Indurain couldn't stay with Riis, who hammered up the slopes to widen his overall lead to two minutes, 42 seconds over second-place Abraham Olano of Spain.

Only three other men have won five Tours - French riders Jaques Anquetil and Bernard Hinault, and Belgian Eddy Merckx. At the start of the Tour, Indurain was favored to win his sixth straight.

But Indurain showed early on he wasn't in winning form. Losing more than four minutes to the leaders in the climbing stage July 6 in the French Alps. After a week in France's Massif Central, many thought Indurain would attack yesterday.

When Riis broke with 7km to go, a struggling Indurain quickly faded.

"Today Miguel Indurain lost the Tour and today Bjarne Riis won it," French rider Laurent Dufloux said after finishing third yesterday just behind France's Richard Virenque.

The other challengers couldn't hold pace with Riis, who finished third last year overall behind Indurain.

Second-place Olano finished just ahead of Indurain yesterday and lost 1:46 in the stage. Swiss rider Tony Rominger moved up to third when Russian Yevgeny Berzin, who started the day in third place,



FULL THROTTLE - Denmark's Bjarne Riis lets out a primal roar as he turns on the speed during the 16th leg of the Tour de France yesterday.

lost nearly three minutes and dropped to sixth overall at 4:07.

Rominger is 2:54 back, just ahead of fourth-place Jan Ullrich at 3:39 and fifth-place Richard Virenque at 4:05.

"I think Hautacam is the key to winning the Tour," Riis said. "I'm happy I went out hard today, but I think it will be more difficult tomorrow because it's a dangerous stage."

Today's stage finishes in Pamplona, Spain, just six miles from Indurain's hometown. But it

will be Riis, not Indurain, wearing the leader's yellow jersey.

"I know Indurain is a close adversary, but I feel good and I have a good shot at winning now," Riis said. "I think it will be difficult tomorrow because we'll be in (Indurain's) part of the world."

In today's stage across the Pyrenees into Pamplona, Spain, race officials are hoping to avoid problems with a Basque separatist group, which has threatened to disrupt the stage.

Officials said they will broadcast race information in French, Spanish and the Basque language as the Tour heads through the Basque region today and tomorrow.

The Tour has been disrupted already, once on July 11 when protesting shop-owners threw rocks on the course and flattened several tires of riders in the race, and again last week when organizers had to reroute a climb to Sestrières, Italy, because of unseasonal snow.

Smadja leaves for Atlanta

OREN Smadja, who injured himself in a training session last week, left last night for Atlanta, together with weightlifter Vacislav Ivanovsky and pole vaulter Dani Krasnov.

They will be the final members of the Israeli delegation to arrive at the Olympic village.

Smadja is still nursing a torn ligament in his left knee and has been receiving physiotherapy twice a day. He will compete on July 23 with a special strap around his knee.

Sounding unlike the confident

HEATHER CHAIT
pre-injury Smadja, the Barcelona bronze medalist said yesterday, "Last week my medal

chances were much greater but I'm going to fight and give the maximum I can. They say a hurt lion can be more aggressive and attacking."

Graf pulls out of Olympics

World No. 1 Steffi Graf has pulled out of the German team for the Olympic Games in Atlanta because of a knee injury, the German Tennis Federation (DTF) said yesterday.

The DTF said a medical examination had revealed a problem with Graf's knee ligaments and her doctor had advised her to take a break of several weeks from training and competitive tennis.

Bet. Jerusalem, Mac. Haifa open European challenges tonight

ISRAELI clubs kick off their European cup challenge this evening when both Betar Jerusalem and Maccabi Haifa take on continental competition in UEFA Cup action.

Fans in the capital are expecting Betar to deliver the goods in convincing style when it takes on Floriana Valetta of Malta at Teddy Stadium. Maccabi Haifa appears to have a much tougher task in its encounter with Partizan Belgrade of Yugoslavia in a match which is being held at the Herzliya Municipal Stadium because the Kiryat Eliezer turf is being re-laid.

The Jerusalemites will be looking to Itzik Zohar, their new signing from Maccabi Tel Aviv, to show some of his talents in midfield, as the rift between the club's two other stars, Ronnen Harazi and Eli Ohana appears to have healed slightly, with the confines of Teddy Stadium now seemingly big enough to house both players' egos.

DEREK FATTAL and ORI LEWIS

The minnows of Malta are not expected to pose a great threat to the Jerusalemites, on their home ground, at least, and the hosts can expect rousing support from their fans. If Monday's training session, when as many as 3,000 spectators turned out to watch a training session, is anything to go by, then there is certainly good reason to turn up at Teddy Stadium tonight at 6 p.m.

The Haifaites have a much sterner prospect in store against the Yugoslav league champions Partizan Belgrade at Herzliya Municipal Stadium this evening.

Yugoslavia returned to European action after the country's four-year absence from continental competition during the Balkan war.

The club, now coached by Leubija Tomacovic, has captured

14 domestic titles since its foundation in 1945, and has a respectable record in continental competition. It reached the semi-finals of the European Cup in 1966 after beating Manchester United in a stirring quarter-final battle, but Real Madrid proved one hurdle too many.

Partizan's current squad has been weakened by the close-season departure of four influential players, and Tomacovic will be relying on young talent in his bid to edge past Maccabi in addition to the proven skill of midfielder Dragan Zoric and forward Damir Zakar.

Haifa coach Giora Speigel has not had an easy time since the last campaign came to a disappointing end. With Rafi Cohen and Ofer Sbitrit moving on and Haim Revivo, Ophir Kopel and Avishai Janno suspended, the northerners face an uncertain period of rebuilding and seem ill-prepared for today's encounter at 5:30 p.m.

Orienteering group sets course for capital

OVER one hundred members from the International Orienteering Federation will gather in Jerusalem today for the biennial congress.

The Israel Sport Orienteering Association, under its President Michael Friedlander, is the first country outside Europe to host the occasion. The IOF's President Sue Harvey from Britain and Vice Presidents Ake Jacobson (Sweden), Hugh Cameron (Australia) and Sarolta Mospart (Hungary) together with repre-

sentatives from 30 countries, will attend.

Tonight's opening ceremony at the Holyland Hotel will be in the presence of Minister of Tourism Moshe Katsav and Jerusalem's mayor Ebud Olmert.

As part of the four-day congress, a mountain-bike orienteering event will be held in the Presidents Forest tomorrow for the members, all active orienteers. The sport, which has its origins in Sweden, has attracted 600 members in Israel.

Cowboys' Irvin gets probation on drug charge

DALLAS (AP) - Michael Irvin was sentenced yesterday to four years probation and fined \$10,000 after the Dallas Cowboys receiver pleaded no contest to a second-degree felony cocaine possession charge.

State District Judge Manny Alvarez warned Irvin he could face the full penalty - up to 20 years in prison - if he violates probation.

Irvin pleaded no contest Monday after prosecutors dropped demands that he plead guilty, which could have jeopardized his career.

Ripken moves back to third after 14 years at shortstop

BALTIMORE (AP) - Cal Ripken's reign as the Baltimore Orioles' shortstop is over.

Orioles manager Davey Johnson, in an effort to shake up his slumping team, started Ripken at third base in Monday night's game, an 8-6 win over Toronto.

Ripken flawlessly banded four grounders at his new position. He went 0-for-4 at the plate, but reached on an error in the ninth inning to start a five-run rally.

The switch ended Ripken's string of 2,216 consecutive games as Baltimore's starting shortstop, a streak that began July 1, 1982. Last week, Ripken started his 13th straight All-Star game at shortstop.

Ripken played that game with a broken nose and he jokingly made a reference to that before taking the field against Toronto. "Yes, I will be playing third base tonight against the wishes of my nose doctor, who deems third base a whole lot more dangerous than shortstop," he said.

Manny Alexander played shortstop and did not have a single chance in the field.

Clearly, Ripken was not distressed over the idea of returning to the position he played when he broke into the majors in 1981.

"It's not really a sad day for me. I'm playing a baseball game," Ripken said. "I'm going to be in there in the lineup like I always am. I'm going to look at it as a challenge, to see if third base is as comfortable as it was years ago."

Johnson hinted about making the move earlier this year, but carried through with his plan Monday, in the wake of a five-game losing streak that dropped the Orioles 10 games behind first-place New York in the AL East.

"I'd rather do it and be done with it," Johnson said. "My concern is with 25 players, not just Cal Ripken, as great as he is. To me, this is not that big a change, except that it involves a Hall of Fame player."

Ripken, who played in his 2,244th consecutive game Monday, was replaced at shortstop by Alexander, 25, who has spent his entire career in the Orioles' organization operating in Ripken's formidable shadow.

Alexander is a lifetime .235 hitter, but Johnson has said for months he would like to see how the 5-foot-10 shortstop would fare if he played every day.

Ripken, 35, entered Monday's game with a .289 average and nine errors.

AMERICAN LEAGUE East Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
New York	56	34	.622	-
Baltimore	47	43	.522	9
Boston	41	49	.456	15
Toronto	41	51	.446	16
Detroit	28	65	.301	29 1/2

Central Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
Cleveland	55	37	.598	-
Chicago	53	39	.576	2
Milwaukee	44	47	.484	10 1/2
Minnesota	43	48	.473	11 1/2
Kansas City	40	53	.430	15 1/2

West Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
Texas	53	39	.576	-
Seattle	50	40	.556	2
California	45	48	.484	8 1/2
Oakland	45	48	.484	8 1/2

NATIONAL LEAGUE East Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
Atlanta	58	34	.630	-
Montreal	50	42	.543	3
New York	44	48	.478	14
Florida	42	50	.457	16
Philadelphia	40	51	.440	17 1/2

Central Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
St. Louis	50	42	.543	-
Houston	49	45	.521	2
Cincinnati	42	45	.483	5 1/2
Chicago	43	49	.467	7
Pittsburgh	40	52	.434	10

West Division				
W	L	Pct	GB	
Los Angeles	50	44	.532	-
Colorado	47	44	.516	1 1/2
San Diego	48	46	.511	2
San Francisco	40	51	.440	8 1/2

Dykstra undergoes surgery

PHILADELPHIA (AP) - Lenny Dykstra won't know for at least several months whether surgery on his back will allow him to resume his baseball career - or force him into retirement.

The Philadelphia Phillies center fielder has been in pain since last season, when doctors discovered he had spinal stenosis, a congenital narrowing of the spinal column that presses on sensitive nerves in the back.

After attempting to play with it this year, Dykstra, 33, nicknamed "Nails" for his toughness, was put on the disabled list May 19. Dykstra underwent back surgery on Monday.

RATES

PRICES ARE AS FOLLOWS - All rates include VAT: Single Weekday - NIS 117 for 10 words (minimum), each additional word NIS 11.70. FRIDAY AND HOLIDAY EVE - NIS 175.50 for 10 words (minimum), each additional word NIS 17.55. MONDAY, WEDNESDAY AND FRIDAY (package) - NIS 257.40 for 10 words (minimum), each additional word - NIS 25.74. WEEK RATE (8 insertions) - NIS 351.00 for 10 words (minimum), each additional word - NIS 35.10. FOUR FRIDAYS (package) - NIS 444.80 for 10 words (minimum), each additional word - NIS 44.48. MONTHLY (24 insertions) - NIS 702.00 for 10 words (minimum), each additional word - NIS 70.20. Rates are valid until 31.10.95.

DEADLINES OFFICE: Jerusalem - weekdays: 12 noon the day before publication; for Friday and Sunday: 8 p.m. on Thursday. Tel Aviv and Haifa - weekdays: 12 noon, 2 days before publication; for Friday and Sunday: 4 p.m. Thursday in Tel Aviv and 12 noon Thursday in Haifa.

DWELLINGS

Jerusalem

HOLIDAY RENTALS

JEWISH QUARTER - BRIGHT, 2 bedroom apartment, fully furnished, kosher kitchen. From July 28-August 28. Tel. 02-280778 (NS).

KIRYAT SHMUEL FURNISHED, wood location, Aug. 3 - Sept. 25. Tel. 02-837078.

NEAR ISRAEL MUSEUM, 3, 1st floor, fully furnished and equipped. Tel. 02-330205.

RENTALS

RAMOT, SPACIOUS VILLA, furnished, kosher, American conveniences, from mid-August. Tel. 02-855463 (NS).

MOTZA ILIT VERY large single room, kitchenette, refrigerator, bath/shower, cupboards, parking, separate entrance. From late September, minimum one year. Tel. 02-342824.

GERMAN COLONY, IOEAL for couple, 2 rooms, furnished, bright, comfortable, long term, from 5.6.95. Tel. 02-9570143 (NS).

HEART OF REHAVIA 2.5 rooms, cozy furnished, ground floor, separate entrance, 5/30. Tel. 02-422257 (NS).

KIRYAT SHMUEL, 3.5 - 1st floor, furnished, balconies, quiet, immediate. Exclusive for "BAIT". Tel. 02-252282.

LONG TERM UNFURNISHED: Lev Rehavia: 4, luxurious, Aboutr (Aminadav): 5, beautiful, furnished. Great Orange: 4, beautiful duplex, terrace. TAC. Tel. 02-631764.

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SITUATIONS VACANT

Report: Hizbullah negotiating trade for MIA bodies

ARIEH O'SULLIVAN and news agencies

GERMANY is mediating a possible swap of the remains of two Israeli MIAs for Shi'ite Moslem prisoners held by Israel, Hizbullah said yesterday. "Our talks with the Germans are still going on for the swap of the remains of the two Israeli soldiers...The talks are within the context of Hizbullah efforts to free the captives in Israeli prisons and Khiam jail," a Hizbullah official told Reuters. Israeli officials would not confirm or deny the reported negotiations.

The officials added that Israel held Hizbullah responsible for the fate of the two bodies. This is not the first time that reports have surfaced over a possible swap between Hizbullah and Israel.

The remains are believed to be those of Yosef Fink and Rahamin Alsheikh. They were captured in a south Lebanon ambush in 1986 and apparently later killed. Israel was informed three years ago, during negotiations for the release of Western hostages held in Lebanon, that Hizbullah held the bodies of these two men.

German government spokesman Peter Hausmann said in Bonn that he was unaware of any German mediation effort.

The German government said in May that Bernd Schmidbauer, the top intelligence

aid to Chancellor Helmut Kohl, was on a secret mission to Beirut that month with Israeli approval.

Germany has never officially confirmed the purpose, but government officials were quoted as saying at the time that Schmidbauer met Hizbullah members to mediate the release of corpses of Israeli soldiers.

A Hizbullah leader has said that Israel holds 70 Lebanese prisoners in Israel and its South Lebanese Army ally holds about 200 Lebanese at Khiam in the security zone.

Hizbullah Deputy Secretary-General Naem Qassem last week freed two captured SLA fighters, but said the group would keep the remains of the two Israeli soldiers for a future exchange deal.

Among Hizbullah captives in Israel is cleric Sheikh Abdel Karim Obeid, captured by Israeli commandos in 1989.

Qassem has accused Israel of aborting a number of exchange proposals by linking the fate of Lebanese detainees with the unknown fate of Israeli pilot Ron Arad, captured in 1986 after his plane was downed over south Lebanon.

Israel has in the past said Arad was in the hands of Iranians or their followers in Lebanon and insisted he should be part of any deal to free Lebanese prisoners.

Ya'alon: Hizbullah is violating Grapes of Wrath understanding

LIAT COLLINS

HIZBULLAH is violating the understandings reached at the end of Operation Grapes of Wrath, IDF Intelligence Chief Moshe Ya'alon told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee yesterday.

Ya'alon said that from Israel's point of view the organization is breaching the understandings by returning to villages and using them as a shelter after an operation.

The intelligence head said attacks in South Lebanon in the last couple of weeks were related to Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's visit to the US, "as a sort of political statement by the Syrians."

"Attempted attacks and preparations for possible Katyusha attacks had increased recently, he said.

He also told the committee that Iran is giving full support to Hizbullah, arming it and training it for activities. The aid Iran gives to Hizbullah amounts to millions of dollars, Ya'alon said. Hamas is also being supported by the Iranians, but unlike Hizbullah, it has its own policies.

Ya'alon said Iran's "fingerprints" in helping terror organizations are seen around the world. A partial list of countries in which Iran is helping terror groups attempting to topple the current regime includes: Bosnia; the Philippines; Thailand; China; Turkey; the Islamic republics in the CIS; Lebanon; Jordan; Saudi Arabia; and the Gulf states.

Iran is trying to become a regional power and hopes to obtain non-conventional weapons and ground-to-ground missiles, he said. The US embargo is not effective because the European states are not cooperating, Russia and China are also helping Iran develop non-conventional weapons. Iran's national agenda places terror activities in the first place, despite the country's difficult economic situation, he said.

In answer to a question by Meretz leader Yossi Sarid, Ya'alon said the IDF Intelligence has not altered its assessment that Syria has undergone a strategic change. When the security element of Syria's defense budget is low, it is a sign the country is not going to war, he said. President Assad understands that he can obtain the Golan Heights only by negotiations, not war. However, from Assad's point of view the test will be Israel's moves.

"I dare say from this point of view if the Israeli government gave him a firm commitment according to which he would receive the Golan Heights he would go for something [an arrangement]," Ya'alon said. "Peace and normalization is, in his view, the price that has to be paid."

Ya'alon said a unilateral withdrawal without an agreement with Syria or a security agreement would mean terror activities in Galilee.



Labor MK Ophir Pines (right) takes his seat at a meeting yesterday of Labor MKs and haredi representatives on the conflict over Jerusalem's Rehov Bar-Ilan. Also seated are MK Moshe Gafni (United Torah Judaism) and Labor MK Ephraim Sneh. (Efraim Kishchok)

Labor MKs discuss Rehov Bar-Ilan conflict with haredi representatives

LIAT COLLINS

LABOR MKs met yesterday with haredi representatives to discuss the closure of Jerusalem's Rehov Bar-Ilan, but the encounter succeeded primarily in highlighting disagreements within Labor on the issue.

The only result was a decision to create a joint committee to examine possible solutions and to try and defuse the tension. Both the meeting and the special committee were initiatives of Labor faction chairman Ra'anan Cohen, who summed up the meeting by saying: "I can feel the tension in the air. It's a dangerous atmosphere. It was easier to make an agreement in Oslo than to make an agreement here."

During the often stormy meeting, some MKs, including Ephraim Sneh, Yona Yahav and faction whip Ephraim Oshaya sided with the haredim on many points, while Uzi Baram, Ophir Pines and Dalia Itzik fumed against closing the road. Baram, however, also voiced anger at what he described as an attempt by Meretz to present itself as the only representative of the secular population.

Pines spoke out against the Sturm Report, which calls for the road to be closed during prayer times. "It's not a compromise, as no one is going to stand with a watch to see what the time is. The real question is how religious and secular live together," Pines said. Sneh spoke out against the convoy operated by Meretz activists on Shabbat calling it "an unnecessary provocation... We have to be considerate to our own people too," he said. "We to the Labor Party can't hurt public sensitivities. It's a haredi area. There are two cultures in this country and we must find the means

of coexistence." He proposed adopting the Sturm Report recommendations.

But his call for coexistence did not go down well with all his fellow Labor MKs.

"I'm very worried by the tune I'm hearing from Ephraim [Sneh] and others," said Baram. "Suddenly after the elections there are new understandings in the party, I don't agree to it. The religious are taking over Jaffa Road and in another few months they'll want to close that, too. Common sense dictates preserving the status quo..."

"There is no reason to change the [party's] stand except for the bad conscience of some people in the party. For years we've been fighting the closure. This is a main road, not an alley," Baram said.

Yona Yahav took exception to Baram's tone. "Haredi Jews are not an enemy country. You're teaching your children to hate me. I'm a Jew."

Dalia Itzik, meanwhile, accused the haredim of teaching their children to hate the secular. MK Moshe Gafni (United Torah Judaism), who also attended the meeting, said the lives of local residents "had been turned into a hell" because of the demonstrations by secular outsiders who deliberately ride down the road on Sabbath. He called on Labor MKs not to be influenced by Meretz "and let us live in peace."

Rabbi David Nahman Blau, who lives in the area, said all the residents along the road are religious. "Not even one percent are secular there. The government has built three alternative roads. For six days a week we suffer from the noise and cars. Let us have one day a week."

Haredi leaders agree to call off Rehov Bar-Ilan Shabbat demo

BILL HUTMAN

HAREDI leaders have agreed to postpone the protest to demand the closure of Rehov Bar-Ilan that they had planned for Shabbat, Jerusalem Deputy Mayor Haim Miller (United Torah Judaism) said yesterday.

Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert asked for the postponement until after the High Court of Justice decision on the matter, he said.

The court is expected to rule next week on whether the government has the right to close the road during prayer times on Shabbat.

A police spokesman confirmed that Jerusalem Police chief Cmdr. Arye Amit was informed by haredi leaders that they had postponed their Shabbat protest. Meretz, which is leading the fight for the road to remain open, plans to stage a demonstration near Rehov Bar-Ilan this Shabbat.

In the meantime, haredi leaders have organized a prayer rally in Jerusalem tomorrow, calling for "the end of the desecration of the Shabbat that is occurring on Rehov Bar-Ilan," Miller said.

Miller noted that the government would have ordered Jerusalem's Rehov Bar-Ilan closed even if the Labor Party were still in power.

Several days before the election, then-health minister Ephraim Sneh met with Miller and other haredi leaders in his Jerusalem office. Sneh made a list of promises Labor hoped would convince haredim to support the candidacy of party leader Shimon Peres, Miller said.

"Sneh asked us to keep the promises quiet, because he thought it would cost his party some votes," Miller told The Jerusalem Post. (Full interview Friday.)

"They made a lot of promises. But for us, it was already too late. We were concerned with their record while in government, and not about their promises about the future," Miller said.

Sneh confirmed that he told Miller and haredi leaders from the Bar-Ilan area that a Labor government would close the road during prayer times, but denied that he wanted this to be kept a secret.

Terrorist bomb-maker sentenced to two life terms

ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

THE Lod military court sentenced a Palestinian bomb-maker to two consecutive life terms for assembling explosives and then dispatching the suicide bombers who blew themselves up last year on buses in Ramat Gan and Jerusalem's Ramat Eshkol neighborhood, killing nine people.

When he was captured, Abdel Nasser Atallah had additional bombs ready for blowing up more

buses, an army spokesman said. One of the judges, who voiced a minority opinion in the military tribunal, sought the death sentence for the "brutally and repeatedly attacking innocent people," the statement said.

Atallah, 23, was recruited and trained by Yitzye Ayyash, the oortor-

ous bomb-making mastermind of the Hamas military wing. Ayyash, known as the "Engineer," was killed in January by a booby-trapped cellular phone in Gaza.

A resident of the Balata refugee camp near Nablus, Atallah was convicted of masterminding the July 1995 suicide bombing on the No. 20

bus in Ramat Gan. Five people were killed and 33 injured in that attack. He was also convicted in the suicide bombing on the Jerusalem No. 19 bus a few weeks later. Four people were killed and 103 injured in that blast. MK Abdul Malik Dahamshe, a member of the Democratic Arab Party, acted as Atallah's defense attorney, the army said.

WEATHER

Haifa	22-31
Tiberias	23-27
Afula	21-33
Samartha	17-29
Tel Aviv	23-30
Jerusalem	17-29
BeerSheva	22-35
Dead Sea	23-40
Ein	25-40
Golan	17-27

Forecast: Partly cloudy to clear in north and center. Clear in the south. No change in temperatures.

AROUND THE WORLD

Location	Low	High	Forecast
Amsterdam	11	18	cloudy
Berlin	10	16	clear
Buenos Aires	10	20	clear
Chicago	11	18	clear
London	11	18	clear
Madrid	11	18	clear
Manila	11	18	clear
Paris	11	18	clear
Rome	11	18	clear
Tokyo	11	18	clear
Washington	11	18	clear
Yokohama	11	18	clear

Winning cards and numbers
THE winning cards in yesterday's daily Chance draw were: Ace of spades, king of hearts, king of diamonds, and king of clubs.

The winning numbers in yesterday's weekly Lotto draw were: 6, 13, 22, 38, 40, 43. The supplementary number was 8.

Burg optimistic about agency's future in Russia

ELDAD BECK
PARIS

JEWISH Agency Chairman Avraham Burg says that two weeks after Russian President Boris Yeltsin's reelection the agency received "encouraging and positive" signals from Moscow concerning the future of the agency's activities in the Russian federation.

Prior to the Russian election campaign Russian justice authorities decided to reexamine the status of the local agency bureaus. Certain bureaus were closed under orders from the Russian Justice Ministry. Some officials in Moscow accused the agency of illegal activities and "brain smuggling."

Registration procedures for the agency's new status are still under examination. Senior agency officials said they thought that the sudden change of Russian attitude towards the agency was connected to the presidential election campaign, but now that the campaign is over they don't understand what is holding up a decision of the Russian administration.

In Paris yesterday Burg declared that during the last three years there has been a considerable increase of immigration to Israel from France.

This year the number of French immigrants is expected to increase to 2,400, a 30 percent rise from the previous year.

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